

'Baby Mothman' Startles Woman in Illinois - Cryptozoology News

cryptozoologynews.com



Posted on Feb 16 2016 - 6:22pm by Cryptozoology News

CHANNAHON, Ill. — A woman said she encountered an unidentified flying creature in Northern Illinois.



The unidentified creature has paper-like wings. Carol drew what she saw on a piece of paper.

Carol, a 58-year-old retired Channahon resident whose last name was omitted for anonymity purposes, said she came upon the oddity last Thursday as she let her dogs out in her backyard.

"I turned on our patio light and seen it," says Carol. "We keep a heated birdbath on our

patio. Is it possible this thing was getting a drink before I scared it into flight."

She claims the unknown animal flew away after about 20 seconds.

"But its flight pattern was straight up!" she added. "In a eerie slow butterfly movement, but straight up."

Carol described what she saw as a 9-inch wide winged creature with gray fur. It did not emit any sounds.

"Its wings were sort of like paper pages. It looked like a ghostly apparition is the best way to describe it."

The Illinoisian says that she has never seen anything like it and that she is sure it was not a bat or a moth.

"It was not a moth or a bat," she states, as she explains how she couldn't get any sleep that night. "I was so bothered by what I had seen. It played on my mind so much that what little sleep I did get contained a dream about this thing."

The White Witch Moth, the largest known lepidopteran, is endemic to South America although it has been seen as far north as Texas.

But Carol is certain that what she saw last week was not a White Witch Moth.

"My personal feeling on what it was... Possible a very small mothman creature. I would of believed it was the Ghost or Witch Moth, but not this time of year and not in Illinois. Plus the crazy flight pattern... The wings were very straight edged, but they fluttered when it moved. I did not see any eyes or face. It was blank . That was strange too. No eyes , mouth or antenna," she explains.

The Mothman, a ghostly winged humanoid, was reportedly first seen on November, 12, 1966 in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. The original report stated that five men were digging a grave at the local cemetery when they spotted the cryptid. Three days later, two different couples reported seeing a "flying human" with red-glowing eyes chasing their vehicles.

According to cryptozoological literature, the creature is believed to be able to predict upcoming events that have the potential to impact human life. The Mothman Prophecies, written by parapsychologist author John Keel in 1975, painstakingly describes the events that lead to the collapse of the Silver Bridge. The story was later brought to the big screen by director Mark Pellington and starring Richard Gere on a film with the book's name.

The Illinois eyewitness provided a drawing of what she saw.



The unidentified creature has paper-like wings. Carol drew what she saw on a piece of paper.

"I wish I were a better sketch artist, but that is pretty much what I had seen . Imagine it now fluttering in the dark. First, I saw it through the glass after I turned on the light. Then, I opened the door for the dogs, and I still could see it. No I don't drink or take drugs," she said.

Last month, a man in McLean County, Illinois, claimed to have seen a headless flying humanoid.

Encounters with flying humanoids around the world have been reported throughout the years and some people believe them to be "angels" or "demons".

In late October, Nick Malicki, who calls himself the *Nephilim Hunter*, released footage of what he says was a "Nephilim" creature attached to the roof of an undisclosed cave in Australia.

3 Comments so far. Feel free to join this conversation.

1. Mista Marsupial February 17, 2016 at 4:38 pm -

Flying book ?

o **broc theil** February 18, 2016 at 7:56 am -

lol

2. ggg February 19, 2016 at 7:35 am -

thus needs to be deleted

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'Wolverine' Sought in Pedestrian Hit-and-Run Crash | Patch

patch.com

The hit-and-run occurred in New Haven. The man is also described as having "vampire teeth."

By Rich Scinto (Patch Staff) - March 7, 2016 11:15 am ET



'Wolverine' Sought in Pedestrian Hit-and-Run Crash

NEW HAVEN, CT- Police are searching for a man who was described as resembling a "wolverine" with "vampire teeth" who fled the scene after hitting a pedestrian with a motor vehicle.

Police and firefighters responded to Grand Avenue between Poplar and Ferry streets March 7 around 12:06 a.m.

A 54-year-old New Haven man was seriously injured while trying to cross the street, said Officer David Hartman, police spokesman.

The driver did not stop and fled west on Grand Avenue in a white Honda Accord that is thought to be close to the 1999-2000 model. It is a two-door coupe with tinted windows and likely has a damaged windshield.

Witnesses reported that the vehicle hit a tree before striking the pedestrian. One witness described the operator as a "Wolverine" with a short, stocky build and that he had "vampire teeth."

He was dressed in a white shirt, jeans and white sneakers.

The pedestrian was originally in critical condition, but has been upgraded to serious. He sustained head and body trauma including a shattered leg.

The driver will face charged related to evading the scene if he is caught. The pedestrian was not in or near a crosswalk when he was struck.

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What is the Story Behind this Mysterious Abandoned House in Fond du Lac?

By Charlie Hintz

on January 28, 2016

<http://www.cultofweird.com/blog/abandoned-house-fond-du-lac/>

34 COMMENTS

What happened inside this abandoned house in Fond du Lac to give it such a sinister and bizarre reputation? The Witherell House has a long and mysterious history.

What's the story behind this abandoned house in Fond du Lac?



The historic Witherell House in Fond du Lac, WI.

January 23, 2016.

Photos: Cult of Weird

On County Highway K, outside of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, is an eerie old house set back from the road. Though not much is known about the property, its unusual architecture and local legends have made it a point of interest for what may be decades of restless teenagers.

Which is exactly how my fate became intertwined with this cursed place.

The year was 1999. I was 18, living with friends in a wretched little backwoods town about an hour

the kitchen and dining area. There, in the middle of the bedroom floor, underneath the area where the carpet had been rolled back, was a HOLE the size of a fire pit. There was a burn hole the size of a fire pit in the middle of a room in this sacred space I knew as "the farm" and the beautiful spindles I loved to study had been destroyed, and the alphabetical system by which I had arranged the books and magazines had been disrupted. Again: someone/some people thought it was OK to LIGHT A FIRE on the wooden floor, right next to a flammable rug, inside a very old house that a) could quickly go up in flames, and b) did not belong to him/her/them. I could not, for the life of me, understand WHY anyone could/would damage something so beautiful and valuable that wasn't even theirs to play with. 7 June 2013 at 02:43 · Edited · Like · 4

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen There came a day when I grew up to the point where I was left alone at night while my dad was on-call in a different city and my mom helped ailing relatives in different states. Then it became my responsibility to respond to the late-night calls from the alarm company and the police. And my heart fell to the ground one evening when I arrived at the farm and saw my own peers lining the gravel shoulder of the road. It's likely they didn't realize that the property belonged to my family, and it's also likely that, in the state they were in, they did not recognize me. I knew enough about some of my classmates to know that they were there trying to touch the "haunting". So, if you have read the entirety of my notes, and you are still curious as to whether there is any paranormal activity on/in these premises or house, take it from one who spent her childhood there that there is NOTHING haunted. There aren't ghosts or goblins or floating figures. The "apparitions" some claim to see haunting the upstairs windows are contraptions that one of my family members gleefully created last summer while I was there; if I remember correctly they are made of an old rug, some hangers, a Halloween pumpkin decoration, some other random objects that trespassers have brought inside with them. 7 June 2013 at 02:45 · Edited · Like · 4

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen Finally, I suppose that with the passing of a family member – especially a parent or sibling or child – or maybe just having the loyalty of being a family member, it's a natural tendency to rise up and defend the defenseless. As has been noted on this thread, my dad died last month on May 17 (<http://www.legacy.com/obitua.../fdlreporter/obituary.aspx...>). Having read most of the 203 comments left previously and not knowing how to respond to some of the ignorant accusations towards my dad and my family, I took some time to consider how I might best satisfy the curiosity of some, kill the curiosity of others, and defend the integrity of my own father. So this is what I will share: My dad was accused of being greedy, grumpy and stiff because he did not accept a financial offer for his paradise, because he did not care to share with strangers his intentions for his personal property, and because he was a bit "dry" when delivering the news that one's parent had died. In his defense, the last word I would use to describe my father is "greedy." He spent a great portion of his career humbly and quietly serving the greater Fond du Lac community not only as a county coroner and forensic pathologist responsible for delivering really difficult news to many people, but in other capacities as well. He carried himself with integrity and based his life on a foundation of values he believed served the greater good. Because my parents declined an undocumented but publicly reported \$1.2M offer for their property does not reflect their greed; in my opinion they demonstrated less greed by refusing the offer. Money doesn't buy happiness, and my dad loved that piece of land, and he knew that many of his children love it as well. And finally, as far as my dad being grumpy

goes... I imagine it's true that he wasn't very forthcoming with information about what he intended to do with the house/property, primarily because he was not entirely sure himself. My dad knew that he enjoyed being out there despite the headaches and costs incurred by trespassers, and he shared his hopes and dreams with people he trusted and had relationships with... It's a common trait of introverts to be a bit guarded, and a common trait of intelligence to be a bit dry-witted in personality. My dad was intelligent and a strong introvert but contributed – and will continue to contribute – greatly to the community by way of his thoughtful responses and careful investments. 7 June 2013 at 03:08 · Edited · Unlike · 9

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen And so I have written a bit of a booklet that I am confident my family will be distressed to know about but that I hope will put to rest some of the stories about and scavenging around this “haunted house”. This landmark is one of my favorite places to visit when I return home, and it holds many special memories of my dad and childhood. I don't know what will happen with the property in the future, but losing it at this point would be like losing my father all over again. (Thanks, Dad, for realizing that the memories you inspired in your children were worth more than a million bucks. I sure do miss you!) 7 June 2013 at 02:52

- Amanda Flores

February 1, 2016 at 11:01 am

Wow, incredible to be learning about your families property. I have driven by this house many times on the way to my grandparents' and cousin's grave sites, always wondering the history behind the property. Next time I drive by it I will remember the incredible memories you shared about it! Thank you!

- Jane Witherell Martell

February 1, 2016 at 6:35 pm

My grandfather, Archie Witherell bought the property during the depression – mid 1930's, restoring the woodwork and upgrading heating/electrical. The surviving elderly brothers who owned it then had lived in the servant's quarters – a portion of the house that was taken off – dragged out of the yard to rest near the site of an earlier frame house nearer the creek. Archie died of natural causes in 1967. Grandma Adelaide lived there with housekeepers until the year before she died, 1981. The property was expensive to maintain, and without Archie and Addie, was in need of other dreamers. There is nothing sinister about the grace of this lovely old home – no mad relatives or hauntings. It wasn't the Witherell's for long in the scheme of things, but very much appreciated.

Jane Witherell Martell

- Charlie Hintz

Charlie Hintz

February 1, 2016 at 9:53 pm

There are records online that show Archie had sons named John and James. Is that correct?

https://www.meaningfulfunerals.net/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=1873156&fh_id=14410

- Katertot

February 13, 2016 at 5:17 am

Hi LesleyAnne Stormo Moen-

Our parents knew each other very well and i believe you were also a classmate and friend of my sisters, as well. I would love to go with you sometime when you are back in Fond du Lac to check out the farm?! I drive by the house quite a bit and have always wanted to see and go inside it! Hit me up on FaceBook please!

Thank you for sharing your story. It was a wonderful and bittersweet. I am also terribly sorry to hear about your Father. I look up to him, as I too, want a career in Forensic Science!

Sincerely,

Kate Weinke

- M Plummer

January 31, 2016 at 6:04 pm

All of your stories are B.S. I was in the house with the owners and their children back in the '70s. It was a gorgeous house and a great family. I don't know how it ended in such disrepair after they sold it but I also wish it had been cared for.

- Megan

January 31, 2016 at 9:58 am

The pathologist referee to above did own the home. He was used as a consultant in the Jeffery dahmer murders. This is only based on legend, but I have lived in fdl all my life. What I understand is that during the time he was away for the Jeffery dahmer the house was broken into and damaged. I heard life, time, and folklore got in the way of resoring the home. I do know that there are sensors that alert to the sheriff's dept. I have also heard the murder story but never saw evidence. Fdl has long history I don't think a big murder would go on without being in the histories somewhere. I have heard of a "bloody bible" somewhere on the second floor. The sanitarium could have been fond du lac county poor house which was located where rolling meadows golf course is now. But the nuns did run a tb hospital that was located behind were the school is now.

Other local things you may be interested in would be witch road near ripon. And also glenbulah cemetery was on unsolved mysteries a while back. Happy hunting

- Dags Anne Jesion

January 30, 2016 at 11:33 pm

I am going to forward this to my daughter. She and her friends experienced paranormal happenings in the 90's at this house. We drove by it and I could feel the dark presence of what my Daughter told me they encountered. I have lived with spirits for as long as I can remember. My daughter has been around several of those spirits as our house in Cedar Grove was haunted with them. Lucky for us they were friendly and we coexisted. If you would like to know about them I would be happy to share.

- lifetime fdl resident

January 30, 2016 at 6:49 pm

Spent a couple evenings in the house in 1985 with many friends. All friends of family

member. Other than the ghost stories we made up that evening to spook things up, nothing sinister about the house.

- Rae Nell Halbur
January 30, 2016 at 6:20 pm
As for the area at Rienzi ... I manage Rienzi Cemetery. It is not a mass grave. Those are actually graves of nuns from the Cathedral Church of St Paul. We do have names in our records. Sorry!.
- Charlie Hintz
Charlie Hintz
January 30, 2016 at 7:34 pm
Thank you for the clarification. I assumed there were records, but I wanted to make note of the local legend. I had to bone up on some of the FDL mythology before writing this, and the "witch circle" pops up again and again.
- Bart
January 30, 2016 at 4:48 pm
Ken Stormo was a Pathologists, he was a Coroner for FDL county and later a Medical Examiner for Milwaukee County. Which is why you found pathology books on the premises. Pretty sure the intent was to retire back to FDL from Milwaukee County and restore the homestead, which he didn't want vandalized, hence the security system. Age caught up with him. Everything else is teenage hormones, imaginations and good story telling for Halloween.
- Joy
January 30, 2016 at 4:03 pm
I love that house. Yes Dr Stormo did own the house. Not sure what happened after he passed. When I was young I always hope I might one day be able to purchase it. I lived on HWY K for a very long time. Joy
- krista
January 30, 2016 at 1:49 pm
I live in fond du lac. I knew people who had claimed to have been in there. I heard a different story. I heard a bunch of nuns lived there long ago & the people i knew who had claimed to be in there said there were half packed suitcases in there, as if the people who had lived there were in a hurry to get out. Anyone heard anything like that??
- charley
February 12, 2016 at 7:58 pm
thats the st nazians church youre thinking of
- Michelle
January 30, 2016 at 8:38 am
Maybe the letter is referring to the Fond du Lac Mental Asylum? It opened in the late 1800's and was on Military Road across from Holiday Inn where most recently Rolling Meadows Nursing Home was.

- Charlie Hintz
Charlie Hintz
January 30, 2016 at 2:44 pm
I'll have to look into that. Thank you!
- Mary Jo Abler
February 1, 2016 at 7:50 pm
the old Asylum was located ON the site of Holiday Inn. I worked at Rolling Meadows Nursing home in late 60's early 70s. When it closed some residents were moved across the road to RM. Those that were not violent. Others were moved either to other nursing homes, or secure facilities as needed. I think that may have been when the County build the Mental health facility on 1st St.
- casey
January 30, 2016 at 7:50 am
Sorry it's Fondy Hauntings, click on info, then click on files, it's towards the bottom. The house on k pops up. The lady that grew up in the house tells a beautiful story about it.
- Bill
January 30, 2016 at 7:31 am
Dr. Stormo owned the house until his recent passing. The story you're referring to was told by his daughter Lesley-Anne, and is on the Facebook page, "When I was young, living in Fond du Lac". You have to be a member of the group in order to see the posts.
- Beth Godwin
January 30, 2016 at 7:50 am
Thanks Bill-am history buff-and any new ideas are great!
- Beth Godwin
January 30, 2016 at 7:17 am
The whole area up off of Cty K has alot of history-alot sad however-one of the buildings now part of the Wisc. prison system located on Taycheedah was also part of the St. Marys nun projects-there is one building that was the unwed mothers house (now used for rehab of prisoners) There are many unmarked graves in a cemetary on the hillside behind it-not sure as to the complete history behind it-many times we could hear the sound of babies crying in the distance-
- Beth Godwin
January 30, 2016 at 7:48 am
The building I speak of is now called Addams Hall and is part of the WI correctional facility in Taycheedah-not that far from both locations noted in this story-
- Martha
January 30, 2016 at 11:27 pm
Sad to admit I was in Taycheedah and Addams Hall is haunted as well as the Harris Hall. There is an old Homestead on the property as well. I heard the graves on the hill are of

dead babies from when it was a place for unwed mothers.

- Mike

January 30, 2016 at 4:36 am

My name is Mike I grew up in Fond du Lac and lived there up until recently. The place is very intriguing and creepy. As a young kid there was really nothing to do in town but get into trouble. A couple of buddy's and me were at the cemetery down the road walking around and as we left heading up cty Rd K we passed the house. Now this is at like 1:30 in the morning and there are candles literally in every window and they were lit. We stopped on the road cuz that was odd and I remember hearing screaming coming from the direction of the house and saw a shadow /image pass by the large front window. I was 14 at the time I told my mom what I had seen and she warned me to stay away from that house said it was cursed with death and I believe it.

- Robert

January 30, 2016 at 1:55 am

Got caught also in 1999, it was creepy saw satanic paraphernalia. Had a cops gun to my temple as we were attempting to escape, since I dropped my flashlight and picked it up thought I had a gun, peed a little.

- slayerkittytania

January 30, 2016 at 12:16 am

I been there, didn't get caught got pictures, its not haunted..

- Jessica

January 29, 2016 at 11:57 pm

that place is wired like fort knox with sensors and cameras everywhere. I got busted in 2004, cost me \$147 and we didn't even break in like charlie did, just looked around outside. creepy place. cops showed up minutes after we jumped the fence and came from all directions – never was so scared as when that happend.

- Nicole

January 29, 2016 at 10:56 pm

A local doctor owns the home and I believe it was his intent to eventually fix it up

- Casey

January 29, 2016 at 4:32 pm

If you go on Fdl haunting on facebook, that lady that grew up in this house tells a beautiful story. It was a while ago so it take a bit ti find it

- Beth Godwin

January 30, 2016 at 7:12 am

looked for the reference on FB and there is nothing there-could you be more specific on this-thanks

- Tina McGraw

January 31, 2016 at 8:18 pm

The House on K

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen Greeting Fondy fans. I am the youngest of Dr. Stormo's eight children. I have five sisters and two brothers, and all eight of us grew up playing in and around "the farm" (as we have always called it). Since there is a request for memories of the place I thought I would share... and I will share a lot. The inside of the house used to be beautiful : the smooth, elegant wooden spindles that lined the staircase leading upstairs that also outlined the stairwell that divides the second floor in half; the gigantic, private rooms that screamed with character whether because of the intricately framed window panes or the "secret cubbies" (not very secret because there are very evident doors indicating their presence) where my sister and I would sneak into and read by flashlight. The dining area – at the front of the house, which actually used to be the main entrance and once entertained a full front porch wrapping from one corner of the house to the other – had great built-in china hutches in the corners and I would dust them religiously because I knew "special things" were going to be stored there; the gigantic living area off the kitchen was also beautiful and, for the longest time, had old curtains hanging from the rods and there was an old cradle that I would play with; upstairs, the built-in bookshelves that lined one half of the common area were stacked with old books, outdated copies of National Geographic, some medical anthologies, financial analytics, and some nature reference manuals. The kitchen always had a familiar musty smell and was fun to explore the contents of the cupboards and drawers because I always found something old and interesting. My next older sister and I would often move from room to room with buckets of Mr. Clean and wash the floors until they gleamed; we would talk about how we would arrange the rooms when we moved into the house together. 7 June 2013 at 02:32 · Edited · Like · 7

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen At one point there was a "summer kitchen" that we eventually tore down because the roof fell in. That's what happens when one builds an addition with a flat-as-a-pancake roof in a Midwestern region prone to heavy snow and rainfall. As a young child I was always instructed to stay out of the summer kitchen because it was dangerous. A bit beyond the house where the kids were trying to demonstrate their German fluency in the 2010 Youtube video, was a ramshackle – but still incredibly designed – house called "the servant's quarters." When Colonel Phillips lived in the main house, his servants resided in the servant's quarters. It took me many years to understand that concept but the day it clicked is the day that I better understood segregation, class privilege and a number of other concepts that I had long struggled with. This was also a fragile structure and it was clear to me that less attention had been used in its construction than had been used in the main house. In the opposite direction of the servant's quarters there was/is a barn and a shed. There was an old ladder in the barn – one of the rungs was cracked through and we knew to skip over that one – and I remember using it to climb to the loft with my sisters and friends. Normally we would jump from the loft into the mounds of hay we had piled up below, but other times we would arrange the multiple bales of hay into new sitting arrangements. ... And the shed... I loved and hated when my dad would unlock the shed door and roll open the creaky door, exposing the darkness to the hot, bright heat. I loved it because I would hear the scurrying of raccoons seeking refuge in their hiding places overhead, and I hated it because I knew those little critters drove my dad nuts. He was always missing some small tool or another and was certain that those "little rascals" had stolen away with whatever he was missing. 7 June 2013 at 01:55 · Edited · Like · 3

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen My dad loved going out to the farm to mow the seemingly

endless fields. That was his paradise, just as it was mine. When I could hear my dad's tractor faintly while I searched the bubbling creek and thick woods for frogs and other natural wonders always I felt like we were both at home. My dad would share my excitement and dismay when I showed him my treasures – whether it be a bucket filled with frogs or a bucket filled with bullet shells found on our property. He explained to me the importance of allowing the frogs to live in their natural habitat just as naturally as he explained that the bullet shells likely came from people sneaking on our property to hunt. We would go out there almost every weekend. One of the scariest memories from my experience at the farm was when my dad decided that it was time to paint the house – something that he did on fairly regular occasion – but instead of using an extension ladder he decided to rent a “cherry picker”. They weren't the safest contraptions, though, and somehow my dad fell from the unit when it was in a raised position and broke some bones. It was scary to see my dad hurt as a child. 7 June 2013 at 02:39 · Edited · Like · 4

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen As I grew up I noticed that a lot of times when we would get to the farm my dad was less-than thrilled. Eventually I realized that those days, instead of pulling out the tractor first, we took a tour of the perimeter of the house and then he dug around for large panes of thick vinyl windows, plywood, a hammer and some nails. He would “board” up (with expensive vinyl) the windows that had been shattered or the doors that had been torn from their hinges. At some point I realized that he was trying to keep people who didn't belong in our sacred space out. And at some point I realized that the uninvited people that still welcomed themselves into this space that clearly wasn't intended for them were actually disrupting the enjoyment that my dad, especially, experienced there. He installed an alarm system which resulted in him receiving a higher volume of middle-of-the-night calls and trips out to the farm to meet the cops and the trespassers, but he still had to board up the windows and doors that the trespassers had violated before getting caught. And, while he never shared this information, I can probably count how many dollars of restitution he received from the trespassers. My breaking point came when I went to the farm with my dad the day after a break-in and someone/some group had destroyed the beautiful spindles on the staircase and stairwell. The spindles were chopped, broken and torn from the fixture, and the beautiful handrails were broken into pieces and used as firewood in the bedroom that was immediately off the kitchen and dining area. There, in the middle of the bedroom floor, underneath the area where the carpet had been rolled back, was a HOLE the size of a fire pit. There was a burn hole the size of a fire pit in the middle of a room in this sacred space I knew as “the farm” and the beautiful spindles I loved to study had been destroyed, and the alphabetical system by which I had arranged the books and magazines had been disrupted. Again: someone/some people thought it was OK to LIGHT A FIRE on the wooden floor, right next to a flammable rug, inside a very old house that a) could quickly go up in flames, and b) did not belong to him/her/them. I could not, for the life of me, understand WHY anyone could/would damage something so beautiful and valuable that wasn't even theirs to play with. 7 June 2013 at 02:43 · Edited · Like · 4

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it's also likely that, in the state they were in, they did not recognize me. I knew enough about some of my classmates to know that they were there trying to touch the "haunting". So, if you have read the entirety of my notes, and you are still curious as to whether there is any paranormal activity on/in these premises or house, take it from one who spent her childhood there that there is NOTHING haunted. There aren't ghosts or goblins or floating figures. The "apparitions" some claim to see haunting the upstairs windows are contraptions that one of my family members gleefully created last summer while I was there; if I remember correctly they are made of an old rug, some hangers, a Halloween pumpkin decoration, some other random objects that trespassers have brought inside with them. 7 June 2013 at 02:45 · Edited · Like · 4

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen Finally, I suppose that with the passing of a family member – especially a parent or sibling or child – or maybe just having the loyalty of being a family member, it's a natural tendency to rise up and defend the defenseless. As has been noted on this thread, my dad died last month on May 17 (<http://www.legacy.com/obitua.../fdlreporter/obituary.aspx...>). Having read most of the 203 comments left previously and not knowing how to respond to some of the ignorant accusations towards my dad and my family, I took some time to consider how I might best satisfy the curiosity of some, kill the curiosity of others, and defend the integrity of my own father. So this is what I will share: My dad was accused of being greedy, grumpy and stiff because he did not accept a financial offer for his paradise, because he did not care to share with strangers his intentions for his personal property, and because he was a bit "dry" when delivering the news that one's parent had died. In his defense, the last word I would use to describe my father is "greedy." He spent a great portion of his career humbly and quietly serving the greater Fond du Lac community not only as a county coroner and forensic pathologist responsible for delivering really difficult news to many people, but in other capacities as well. He carried himself with integrity and based his life on a foundation of values he believed served the greater good. Because my parents declined an undocumented but publicly reported \$1.2M offer for their property does not reflect their greed; in my opinion they demonstrated less greed by refusing the offer. Money doesn't buy happiness, and my dad loved that piece of land, and he knew that many of his children love it as well. And finally, as far as my dad being grumpy goes... I imagine it's true that he wasn't very forthcoming with information about what he intended to do with the house/property, primarily because he was not entirely sure himself. My dad knew that he enjoyed being out there despite the headaches and costs incurred by trespassers, and he shared his hopes and dreams with people he trusted and had relationships with... It's a common trait of introverts to be a bit guarded, and a common trait of intelligence to be a bit dry-witted in personality. My dad was intelligent and a strong introvert but contributed – and will continue to contribute – greatly to the community by way of his thoughtful responses and careful investments. 7 June 2013 at 03:08 · Edited · Unlike · 9

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen And so I have written a bit of a booklet that I am confident my family will be distressed to know about but that I hope will put to rest some of the stories about and scavenging around this "haunted house". This landmark is one of my favorite places to visit when I return home, and it holds many special memories of my dad and childhood. I don't know what will happen with the property in the future, but losing it at this point would be like losing my father all over again. (Thanks, Dad, for realizing that the memories you inspired in your children were worth more than a

million bucks. I sure do miss you!)7 June 2013 at 02:52

north of Milwaukee in the heart of Deliverance country. As can be expected when you live in the sphincter of the great Dairy State, we were horrendously bored and desperate for adventure one day. We were probably talking about haunted locations or some similar topic, as the night before we had been creeping around the woods near Rienzi Cemetery in search of witch graves and gates to Hell.

A friend from nearby Fond du Lac shared a story he had heard about an abandoned house in the area. According to local legend, a girl had murdered both her parents there. And he knew the location of the house. As a matter of fact, it was just down the road from Rienzi.

How could I possibly resist?

So a group of us jumped in the car and headed off into the wild unknown, completely unaware of the misfortune that would soon befall us.



Fond du Lac abandoned house

Today, the trees and bushes have been trimmed back, and a neighborhood of modern houses sprouted up beside the house. 16 years ago, though, the property was isolated, ominous, overgrown and barely visible from the road. White paint was peeling off to reveal the gray, weathered clapboard beneath. Most of the windows were broken, gaping black voids. A sun room in the back had collapsed inward.

The door in the back was padlocked shut. A large NO TRESPASSING sign should have been enough to deter us at that point...but the house seemed completely neglected. It was falling in on itself. How would anyone notice, or possibly even care, if we went in and looked around?

Well, it turns out someone cares very much, for reasons that remain a mystery to this day.

Someone in our group pushed the door open, probably breaking the latch off the rotting door frame, and we crept inside. I didn't expect to find anything, but of course I was hoping for blood stains, human remains...anything to substantiate the legend. The first thing I remember seeing was a mattress on the bare wood floor of the living room, in front of a large fireplace. On the mattress was a Ouija board and some burned candles.

There were cans of paint and other supplies covered in layers of dust in the kitchen. I found a few receipts laying around on the counter, the most recent dated 1987. Whoever was attempting to fix the place up seemed to have given up a long time ago.

Musty books were piled on the floor of an upstairs room. I examined a few of them, which appeared to be pathology texts with obscure symptoms and disorders underlined throughout.

The fieldstone basement was extremely dark, so we didn't go too far down there. I remember noticing a few pieces of rusted metal, perhaps a water heater and furnace, resting just beyond the light that shone down the narrow staircase.

The Letter

Back upstairs, along the side of the wall in which the fireplace had been built, I found a single square cupboard door. It opened downward to function as a writing surface for a secretary desk-style compartment in the wall. It was empty, but I noticed an ornate wooden handle at the back. I tugged on it, and realized the whole desk was just loosely set into the wall. I carefully slid it out...to reveal a letter that had been hidden behind it.

The paper was stiff and yellowed, handwritten in pencil. It was addressed to a Mr. J. Witherell, an apology from the Fond du Lac sanatorium that, since the facility was closing, his wife and daughter would have to be discharged. Was this evidence that some unspeakable tragedy may have actually happened there? If the letter was real, how had it never been found before?

Excited by actual, physical evidence to support some semblance of the story I was there to find, I slipped the letter into my back pocket and started toward the door. Just as I was about the exit the house, a Fond du Lac County sheriff rounded the corner from the front of the house and was approaching the door. I quickly alerted the others, but there would be no escape. Through the large front windows, we could see firetrucks and squad cars lined up out on the road.

While most of us were exploring, two members of our group had apparently been throwing around wood and other junk they found laying around. In the process, they managed to knock a fire detector off the ceiling, which triggered an automated alarm at the fire department.

There was a moment of panic, then we decided to go outside and face the firing squad. I wasn't keen on the idea of a theft charge, so I left the letter on the mantle of the fireplace before stepping outside.

As we were explaining ourselves to the officers, an older woman (the owner or caretaker of the property) walked around the house, surveying the damage. She claimed she lived nearby, and had heard the sound of smashing glass from her home. She said something to the effect that she had been there

the day prior and that all the windows were intact. As a result, not only did we all get fined for trespassing, we were assessed restitution for property damage totaling \$1,500 each.

We were told that trespassers were pulled out of that house frequently. But why is a dilapidated house that's been vacant for decades so heavily protected? Why is the grass mowed and the property regularly maintained?



The historical Witherell House in Fond du Lac

History of the Witherell House

I've come across several recent references to the house, suggesting rumors still persist. Its reputation for being wired with motion detectors and other security measures is well known.

In a 2014 episode of Real Ghost Stories Online (listen below), hosts Tony & Jenny Brueski briefly discuss the house. They theorize that maybe the owner is trying to protect people from a dangerous presence inside.

I've often thought that, if something tragic did in fact happen there, maybe the family couldn't bear to let the memory wither away with the house. I felt differently in 1999, though. I was angry and highly suspicious. Someone was trying to cover up a violent and brutal crime from their family's past, and the letter to J. Witherell was the evidence that would justify the outrageous fines I couldn't possibly afford to pay.

Until recently, I had never found any factual information on the house. I was searching for a record of a sanatorium in Fond du Lac the other day when I stumbled upon a searchable database on the Wisconsin Historical Society website. Much to my disbelief, Fond du Lac's most mysterious (and arguably most feared) abandoned house had a history. According to the historical record, it is an 1873 Queen Anne known as the Witherell House. This is the first reference I've found to the name on the letter, giving credence to its authenticity.

From the description of the property:

Two story, Late Picturesque frame house with clapboard siding. Gable roof with bargeboards. Oddly shaped windows. Pictured in 1874 Atlas of Fond du Lac County.

Phillips, the former sheriff of Onondaga County, New York and a state representative, arrived in Fond du Lac County in 1852 with his brother Lyman Phillips. Primarily a farmer, Phillips was also elected to the state Senate in 1860, and provost marshal of the Fond du Lac district in 1863-1864. Elihu was also the founder and first president of the Fond du Lac Savings Bank.

The Lyman Phillips (Elihu's brother) house was very similar in design and appeared on Bogert & Haight's 1862 Map of Fond du Lac County Wisconsin. This residence, however, was destroyed by fire in 1876.



Historical photo of the abandoned Witherell house on Hwy K in Fond du Lac



Historical photo of the abandoned Witherell house in Fond du Lac



Historical photo of the abandoned Witherell house in Fond du Lac

As you can see in the photos above, the house was in much better condition when it was the subject of

a historical survey in 1974.

Searching for the Fond du Lac Sanatorium



A vintage postcard of St. Mary's Springs sanitarium in Fond du Lac
Postcard from St. Mary's Springs Sanitarium c.1901

I have yet to find a record of a facility specifically called the Fond du Lac Sanatorium. Just down the road from the Witherell House, however, is St. Mary's Springs Catholic high school. It was built in 1901 by the Sisters of Saint Agnes to serve as a sanitarium, but it closed in 1909 to become a girl's boarding school.

Is that what the letter was referring to?

What happened in the house after J. Witherell's sick wife and daughter returned home?

It's worth noting that St. Mary's Springs, the Witherell House, and Rienzi Cemetery are all on Hwy K within just a few minutes of each other. At the back of the cemetery is a single monument and four small cornerstones possibly marking the perimeter of a mass grave. This is the infamous Witch Circle, rumored to be the final resting place of nuns from St. Mary's Springs who were excommunicated for practicing witchcraft and getting pregnant.

Have you had an experience with the Witherell House, or have some insight into its real history?
Please share it in the comments below.

34 COMMENTS

- tantam

February 11, 2016 at 5:20 pm

This is fascinating. Thanks for sharing

- Tina McGraw

January 31, 2016 at 8:19 pm

YOU-FIND-THAT-STORY—@

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fondyhauntings/>

- TINA

January 31, 2016 at 8:16 pm

The House on K

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen Greeting Fondy fans. I am the youngest of Dr. Stormo's eight children. I have five sisters and two brothers, and all eight of us grew up playing in and around "the farm" (as we have always called it). Since there is a request for memories of the place I thought I would share... and I will share a lot. The inside of the house used to be beautiful : the smooth, elegant wooden spindles that lined the staircase leading upstairs that also outlined the stairwell that divides the second floor in half; the gigantic, private rooms that screamed with character whether because of the intricately framed window panes or the "secret cubbies" (not very secret because there are very evident doors indicating their presence) where my sister and I would sneak into and read by flashlight. The dining area – at the front of the house, which actually used to be the main entrance and once entertained a full front porch wrapping from one corner of the house to the other – had great built-in china hutches in the corners and I would dust them religiously because I knew "special things" were going to be stored there; the gigantic living area off the kitchen was also beautiful and, for the longest time, had old curtains hanging from the rods and there was an old cradle that I would play with; upstairs, the built-in bookshelves that lined one half of the common area were stacked with old books, outdated copies of National Geographic, some medical anthologies, financial analytics, and some nature reference manuals. The kitchen always had a familiar musty smell and was fun to explore the contents of the cupboards and drawers because I always found something old and interesting. My next older sister and I would often move from room to room with buckets of Mr. Clean and wash the floors until they gleamed; we would talk about how we would arrange the rooms when we moved into the house together. 7 June 2013 at 02:32 · Edited · Like · 7

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen At one point there was a "summer kitchen" that we eventually tore down because the roof fell in. That's what happens when one builds an addition with a flat-as-a-pancake roof in a Midwestern region prone to heavy snow and rainfall. As a young child I was always instructed to stay out of the summer kitchen because it was dangerous. A bit beyond the house where the kids were trying to demonstrate their German fluency in the 2010 Youtube video, was a ramshackle – but still incredibly designed – house called "the servant's quarters." When Colonel Phillips lived in the main house, his servants resided in the servant's quarters. It took me many

years to understand that concept but the day it clicked is the day that I better understood segregation, class privilege and a number of other concepts that I had long struggled with. This was also a fragile structure and it was clear to me that less attention had been used in its construction than had been used in the main house. In the opposite direction of the servant's quarters there was/is a barn and a shed. There was an old ladder in the barn – one of the rungs was cracked through and we knew to skip over that one – and I remember using it to climb to the loft with my sisters and friends. Normally we would jump from the loft into the mounds of hay we had piled up below, but other times we would arrange the multiple bales of hay into new sitting arrangements. ... And the shed... I loved and hated when my dad would unlock the shed door and roll open the creaky door, exposing the darkness to the hot, bright heat. I loved it because I would hear the scurrying of raccoons seeking refuge in their hiding places overhead, and I hated it because I knew those little critters drove my dad nuts. He was always missing some small tool or another and was certain that those "little rascals" had stolen away with whatever he was missing. 7 June 2013 at 01:55 · Edited · Like · 3

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen My dad loved going out to the farm to mow the seemingly endless fields. That was his paradise, just as it was mine. When I could hear my dad's tractor faintly while I searched the bubbling creek and thick woods for frogs and other natural wonders always I felt like we were both at home. My dad would share my excitement and dismay when I showed him my treasures – whether it be a bucket filled with frogs or a bucket filled with bullet shells found on our property. He explained to me the importance of allowing the frogs to live in their natural habitat just as naturally as he explained that the bullet shells likely came from people sneaking on our property to hunt. We would go out there almost every weekend. One of the scariest memories from my experience at the farm was when my dad decided that it was time to paint the house – something that he did on fairly regular occasion – but instead of using an extension ladder he decided to rent a "cherry picker". They weren't the safest contraptions, though, and somehow my dad fell from the unit when it was in a raised position and broke some bones. It was scary to see my dad hurt as a child. 7 June 2013 at 02:39 · Edited · Like · 4

LesleyAnne Stormo Moen As I grew up I noticed that a lot of times when we would get to the farm my dad was less-than thrilled. Eventually I realized that those days, instead of pulling out the tractor first, we took a tour of the perimeter of the house and then he dug around for large panes of thick vinyl windows, plywood, a hammer and some nails. He would "board" up (with expensive vinyl) the windows that had been shattered or the doors that had been torn from their hinges. At some point I realized that he was trying to keep people who didn't belong in our sacred space out. And at some point I realized that the uninvited people that still welcomed themselves into this space that clearly wasn't intended for them were actually disrupting the enjoyment that my dad, especially, experienced there. He installed an alarm system which resulted in him receiving a higher volume of middle-of-the-night calls and trips out to the farm to meet the cops and the trespassers, but he still had to board up the windows and doors that the trespassers had violated before getting caught. And, while he never shared this information, I can probably count how many dollars of restitution he received from the trespassers. My breaking point came when I went to the farm with my dad the day after a break-in and someone/some group had destroyed the beautiful spindles on the staircase and stairwell. The spindles were chopped, broken and torn from the fixture, and the beautiful handrails were broken into pieces and used as firewood in the bedroom that was immediately off

10 Bizarre Period Myths Throughout History That People Actually Believed

BY LEAH DEARBORN
<http://qklnk.co/HZA9WA>

For hundreds of years, women's periods were said to come fraught with a number of strange side effects. Here are just a few of the complications that have been variously attributed to the monthly flow.



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It Drives Animals Mad

The smell of the blood was rumored to disorient or repel animals. Bees, if looked upon by a bleeding woman, would supposedly drop dead. In addition to blunting weapons, Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder believed that the stare of a woman on her menses could drive dogs mad. Women were also discouraged from any activity that involved hunting, since the smell of the blood was said to alert potential prey.



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Alcohol Spoils

Rumors that a woman's period could turn wine into vinegar began back in the world of the ancient Mediterranean. Just entering a vineyard during her time of the month was said to be enough for a woman to interrupt the fermentation process. Other cultures, such as the Gisu of Uganda, noted the sourness of beer if exposed to the same conditions.



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Menstruation Kills Plants

Pliny the Elder also made notes regarding the impact of bleeding on plants: "grafts die, the seeds in gardens are dried up, the fruit of trees falls off..." Women in 19th century Saigon were forbidden from working in the opium trade since it was believed that it would cause the plants to turn bitter. European peasants in Germany, Holland, Spain, and Italy echoed the belief that menstruating women made

gardens to wither.



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Sex Is Absolutely Ruined

This period taboo has appeared in numerous cultures across centuries. Second century Greek physician Soranus of Ephesus stated that conception was not possible during menstruation, for "the moisture not only saps the vitality of the semen but entirely neutralizes it." Archbishop Caesarius of Arles believed that children could be conceived, but they ran the risk of being possessed by the devil. Thomas Aquinas and other early theologians echoed the sentiment that intercourse during menstruation was a mortal sin, which lead to malformed offspring.



Keystone-france/Gamma-Keystone/Getty Images

The Blood Can Cause Or Cure Diseases

The first 'napkin' worn by a virgin was saved as a cure for the plague. Other ailments known to be cured by menstrual blood included leprosy, hemorrhoids, epilepsy, gout, and headaches. The theory of humors promoted the idea that the menstrual cycle purged excess waste from the body. Because of this it was believed that older women carried dangerous levels of built-up toxins that could harm men and children.



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Women Change The Weather

Once again, this concept dates back to ancient Rome and Pliny the Elder. In addition to its many other startling effects, Pliny wrote in "Natural History" that menstruation could stop hailstorms, whirlwinds, and lightening.



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Divine Punishment Is The Source

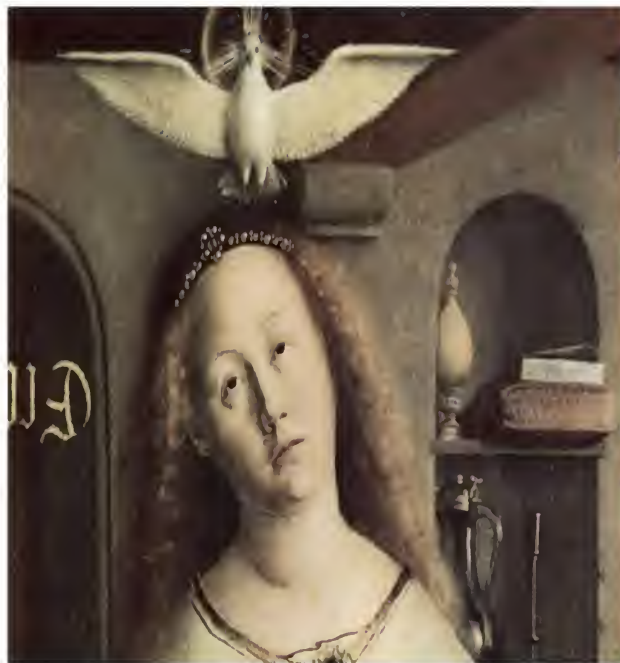
Monthly bleeding was interpreted in the Middle Ages as a sign of unholiness, a curse that was assigned as punishment for Eve's transgressions. In 234 A.D., the church instituted "Corpus Iuris Canonici," which prevented women from receiving communion while on their periods. In India, legends regarding menstruation date back thousands of years to ancient Hindu scripture where the god Indra committed a grave sin, and menstruation was created to atone for it. Even today, women are forbidden from entering holy sites in some areas while on their periods.



Wikimedia Commons

It Does Strange Things To Hair

Menstruation could turn an onlooker's hair gray, according to some groups of Australian aborigines. In the 1920s, one myth claimed that a wave wouldn't stay in a woman's hair if it was put in while she was on the rag.



A Ritual Sacrifice May Be Required

The Old Testament contains a text on menstrual defilement in Leviticus that suggests a remedy for the impurities caused by monthly blood: “When she is cured of her flow, she will let seven days pass then she will be clean. On the eighth day she is to take two turtle doves or two young pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. With one of them the priest is to offer a sacrifice for sin and with the other a holocaust.” Medieval women were also advised to burn a toad in a pot and wear the ashes around their waists to staunch a heavy flow.

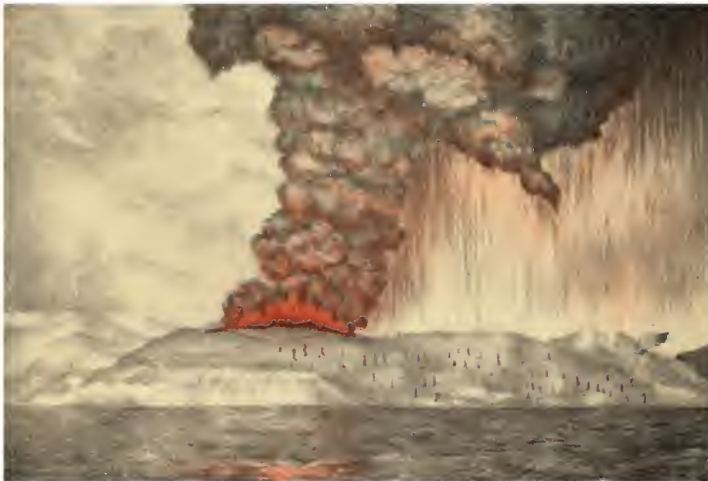


Women Make Bad Sushi

There are many superstitions around the world that concern how the period can change or ruin food, some that persist to this day despite ancient origins. Salt was said to turn black or the rotting process sped up. Generally, the story is that the blood somehow taints or spoils the food. In Japan, some sushi chefs still believe that the menstrual cycle causes an “imbalance of tastes” that leads to inferior sushi.

10 Facts About Krakatoa's 1883 Eruption

mentalfloss.com



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Image credit:

Wikimedia Commons

On August 27, 1883, Krakatoa (alternately called Krakatau), an uninhabited volcanic island near Indonesia, erupted spectacularly, expelling huge clouds of gas and ash, generating massive tsunamis, and killing more than 36,000 people. Here are a few things you might not have known about one of the most powerful and devastating eruptions in modern history, which had effects worldwide.

1. SIGNS OF THE ERUPTION TO COME BEGAN IN MAY.

Krakatoa had been dormant for around 200 years when it woke up on May 20, 1883. A cloud of ash, reported by the captain of a German warship, rose nearly 7 miles above the island. According to an 1884 article in *The Atlantic*, while no one in Anjer, 25 miles from the island, or Merak, 35 miles away, reported anything unusual that day, the inhabitants of Batvia, 80 miles away, "were startled by a dull booming noise, followed by a violent rattling of doors and windows. Whether this proceeded from the air or from below was a matter of doubt, for unlike most earthquake shocks the quivering was only vertical." There were rumblings and blasts from the volcano's vents for the next three months.

2. THE ERUPTION STARTED ON AUGUST 26.



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Library of Congress

On the afternoon of August 26, Krakatowa began to erupt in earnest, sending ash clouds at least 22 miles above the island. According to *The Atlantic*,

"High waves first retreated, and then rolled upon both sides of the strait. During a night of pitchy darkness these horrors continued with increasing violence, augmented at midnight by electrical phenomena on a terrifying scale, which not only enveloped the ships in the vicinity, but embraced those at a distance of ten to twelve miles. The lurid gleam that played on the gigantic column of smoke and ashes was seen in Batava, eighty

miles away. Some of the debris fell as fine ashes in Cheribon, five hundred miles to the eastward."

But the most terrifying part of the disaster wouldn't occur until the next day.

3. ONE ERUPTION ON AUGUST 27 WAS HEARD 2800 MILES AWAY.

Starting at 5:30 a.m. on August 27, Krakatoa experienced four massive explosions over the course of 4.5

hours. The blasts were so loud they could be heard as far away as Sri Lanka and Perth, Australia—3000 miles away. The force of the final blast at 10:02 a.m. was 10,000 times more powerful than the one unleashed by the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and shockwaves generated by the eruption registered all over the world.

4. IT SPAWNED MASSIVE TSUNAMIS ...



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Each eruption on Krakatoa caused massive tsunamis. When the volcano collapsed into the ocean, it generated a tsunami at least 120 feet tall, which was so powerful it tossed blocks of coral weighing 600 tons on shore, carried a steamship one mile inland, killing all 28 crewmen, and wiped out 165 villages in nearby Java and Sumatra. One field worker, 5 miles inland on Java, later recalled of the tsunami,

"[A]ll of a sudden there came a great noise. We ... saw a great black thing, a long way off, coming towards us. It was very high and very strong, and we soon saw that it was water. Trees and houses were washed away ... The people began to ... run for their lives. Not far off was some steep sloping ground. We all ran towards it and tried to climb up out of the way of the water. The wave was too quick for most of them, and many were drowned almost at my side ... There was a general rush to climb up in one particular place. This caused a great block ... A great struggle took place for a few moments, but ... one after another, they were washed down and carried far away by the rushing waters. You can see the marks on the hill side where the fight for life took place. Some ... dragged others down with them. They would not let go their hold, nor could those above them release themselves from this death-grip."

There was also one pretty hard-to-believe tale of survival. Simon Winchester, an expert on the eruption, wrote in the BBC about a German quarry manager who was swept away from the top of his three-story office building, which in turn sat on top of a hill nearly 100 feet tall. According to the quarry manager's accounts, written later, he was carried along on the wave's crest when "suddenly to his right, he saw, being swept alongside him, an enormous crocodile":

"With incredible presence-of-mind he decided the only way to save himself was to leap aboard the crocodile and try to ride to safety on its back. How he did it is anyone's guess, but he insists he leapt on, dug his thumbs into the creature's eye-sockets to keep himself stable, and surfed on it for 3km. He held on until the wave broke on a distant hill, depositing him and a presumably very irritated croc on the jungle floor. He ran, survived, and wrote about the story."

Most of the 36,417 people who died—90 percent—were killed by tsunamis. The remaining 10 percent fell victim to falling debris called tephra and pyroclastic flows, hot, fast moving masses of volcanic gas and ash.

5. ... AND RELEASED 11 CUBIC MILES OF ASH INTO THE ATMOSPHERE.

The sun in the area was blacked out for three days, and the cloud of ash spread 275 miles. "The matter expelled," wrote *The Atlantic*, "rose to an elevation so tremendous that, on spreading itself out, it covered the whole western end of Java and the south of Sumatra for hundreds of square miles with a pall of impenetrable darkness." There was so much ash that in Nicaragua, on the other side of the Pacific, the sun was blue. After the eruption, floating pumice fields—nearly 10 feet deep in places—clogged ports, interrupting trade.

6. WHEN THE ERUPTION WAS OVER, MOST OF THE ISLAND WAS GONE.



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Pre-eruption, the island was 2625 feet high and 3 by 5.5-miles, with three vents. But the last eruption—which had an estimated force of 200 megatons of TNT—blew the island apart. Only one-third of the island survived.

7. IT CHANGED THE COLOR OF THE SUNSETS ...

All of the volcanic debris from Krakatoa's eruption caused fiery red sunsets around the world up to three years afterward. Poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, who lived in London, described the Krakatoa sunsets as "more like inflamed flesh than the lucid reds of ordinary sunsets; the glow is intense; that is what strikes everyone; it has prolonged the daylight, and optically changed the season; it bathes the whole sky, it is mistaken for the reflection of a great fire."

8. ... WHICH MAY BE WHY THE BACKGROUND OF THE SCREAM IS SO VIBRANT.



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In 2003, researchers announced in *Sky and Telescope* that they had found not only the exact location in Oslo, Norway, where Munch placed the figure in his famous 1893 painting, but that they had determined that particles in the air from Krakatoa's eruption were responsible for the painting's blood-red sky. "It was very satisfying to stand in the exact spot where an artist had his experience," paper author Donald Olson, a physics and astronomy professor at Texas State University, said in a press release. "The real importance of finding the location, though, was to determine the direction of

view in the painting. We could see that Munch was looking to the south-west—exactly where the Krakatoa twilights appeared in the winter of 1883-84." The scientists said that newspaper articles published after the eruption reported the red skies.

9. THE ERUPTION AFFECTED EARTH'S TEMPERATURE FOR YEARS AFTERWARD.

The volcanic debris in the atmosphere was so great that it filtered the amount of sunlight reaching Earth's surface, causing global temperatures to fall 1.2 degrees Celsius the next year. Temperatures were finally normal again in 1888.

10. THERE'S A NEW VOLCANO THERE TODAY.

In December 1927, fishermen discovered that a new volcano had emerged from the caldera of the former Krakatoa. It was named Anak Krakatau (Child of Krakatau), and it's still active today. You can see it in action in the video above.

August 27, 2015 - 4:00am

Erin is the Executive Editor of MentalFloss.com. Previously, she covered everything from natural disasters to bridge engineering to the science behind sci-fi movies for *Popular Mechanics* magazine. When she's not editing or writing, you can find her karaokeing, reading non-fiction, watching Investigation Discovery and hockey (go NYR!), or hanging out with her cats, Oliver and Pearl.

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10 of NYC's Lost Grand Hotels

03/01/2016 at 10:00 am

Posted In Architecture, Guides, New York

by Untapped Cities



The original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel

New York City has always been a hot spot for luxury hotels, which compete with each other for the latest amenities, most unique architecture, and more. But the cycle of construction, demolition, and rebirth is as old as the city itself, apart from the much needed landmarks preservation designations, and many of what were once New York's grandest hotels have been lost to history. As a look back, here are ten notable hotels no longer standing.

7. Original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel



The original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel

Today's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel ^(7.1) on Park Avenue is full of its own rich history and secrets, ^(7.2) but the original hotel was on the site of what is now the Empire State Building. ^(7.3)

In 1893, William Waldorf Astor hired renowned architect Henry Hardenbergh, who would later design The Dakota apartments ^(7.4), to build a 13-story grand hotel on the site of what was his family mansion ^(7.5). At the time, it was the largest and most luxurious hotel in the world, with 450 rooms. He then hired the talented George C. Boldt to act as General Manager. Mr. Bolt, with his reputation for the highest levels of service, quickly brought to the Waldorf Hotel a reputation as a premiere hotel—the first to offer private bathrooms, room service and electricity throughout.

Meanwhile, John Jacob Astor IV owned the other end of the block. Four years after the construction of the Waldorf, John Jacob built a 17-story hotel within feet of the Waldorf, using the same architect. His intention was to name the hotel The Schermerhon after his mother and he approached George Boldt with the idea of managing his hotel, since George worked just feet away for his cousin. But George had a problem with the hotel name and said that he would only agree to manage it if it had a more appealing and less difficult name. John Jacob came back with the name “The Astor,” named after the fur-trapping colony in Oregon where his family was originally from.

In time—and having good business sense—it was decided that the hotels should be physically joined together by a long hallway. The combined hotels, opening in 1897, became the largest hotel in the world. The sinking of The Titanic took the life of John Jacob Astor IV in 1912, and William died of a heart attack in 1919. The land where the grand hotel sat was sold in 1928 to a developer, who demolished the building and erected the Empire State Building. ^(7.6)

8. Pabst Grand Circle Hotel



View of the Pabst Grand Circle Hotel and the Majestic Theatre at Columbus Circle in 1903.

Image via Museum of the City of NY blog. (8.1)

None of the Victorian-style buildings that once defined Columbus Circle (8.2) survive today. Pabst Grand Circle Hotel and the Majestic Theatre were built for the Pabst Brewing Company in 1903. The sign in the above photo advertises Majestic Theatre's production of "Babes in Toyland." The complex was demolished in 1954 and replaced by the New York Coliseum, a convention center that was in turn demolished in 2000. In the construction of the Coliseum, 59th Street was eliminated between Broadway and Columbus Avenue, a street pattern that continues until this day. Today, this is the site of the Time Warner Center. (8.3)

9. The Biltmore Hotel



The original plans for Grand Central Terminal (9.1) called for an entire city, dubbed Terminal City, (9.2) to accompany the now landmarked train station.

The Biltmore, (9.3) located on Madison Avenue between 43rd and 44th Street, was the brainchild of Gustav Baumann and was the fourth grand New York City hotel to be designed by Warren & Wetmore, the architects of Grand Central. Its design ensured that at twenty-six stories it still maintained a harmonious relationship with the rest of Terminal City. A palm court, grand ballroom, Italian garden, and private arrival station at Grand Central ensured that the Biltmore would be in a class of its own. Its name lured the likes of Zelda and F. Scott Fitzgerald to honeymoon there. Fitzgerald and J.D. Salinger incorporated the hotel into their stories.

In August 1981, the Biltmore was gutted and from its steel frame was transformed into Bank of America Plaza, or 335 Madison Avenue. A small reminder of the building's past is still present at 335 Madison Avenue. The clock that once hung at the entrance to the Biltmore's palm court and its piano can still be found in the lobby of 335 Madison Avenue.

10. The Original Ritz-Carlton Hotel



Image via Library of Congress (10.1)

The original Ritz-Carlton Hotel, opened in 1911, was located at Madison Avenue and 46th Street, also designed by Warren & Wetmore as part of Terminal City. (10.2) In addition to its luxurious amenities, ballrooms rooms and cuisine (French chef Louis Diat is said to have invented Vichyssoise soup there, though others have made the same claim), it was apparently notable also for its engineering.

A magazine on engineering from 1913 (10.3) proclaimed that “hotel ventilation has become a fine art,” with a three page feature on the system at the Ritz-Carlton New York.

The Biltmore was demolished in 1951 to make way for an office building. A new Ritz-Carlton would not operate again in New York City until 1982 on Central Park South.

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Tags:

Bay Ridge, Biltmore Hotel, Brighton Beach, Columbus Circle, coney island, Fort Hamilton, Grand Central Terminal, Grand View Hotel, Hotel Pabst, Manhattan Beach, slideshowpage, terminal city, times square, waldorf astoria

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1. Grand View Hotel in Brooklyn



Grand View Hotel-Brooklyn-Bay Ridge-Show Boat-NYC

The Grand View Hotel once stood at Fort Hamilton ^(1.1) in Bay Ridge ^(1.2), Brooklyn overlooking the Narrows and Fort Wadsworth ^(1.3), Staten Island. The hotel was built in 1886 for \$122,000, with a capacity of 1,000 guests. Built onto a bluff, the water side of the hotel had ten stories, and the street side had seven, with wraparound open-air balconies much like a Mississippi show boat. As was the fashion of the time, some New Yorkers spent the summer months there on a long-term basis. It was built by the Brooklyn City Railroad, and purchased in 1891 by Adolph Ruehl for just \$80,000, because as The New York Times ^(1.4) reported, it had “been a failure.” But just two years later in 1893, the hotel went up in flames.

A New York Times article ^(1.5) reported that the fire was caused by an explosion in the basement where an “amateur photographer’s outfit of chemicals” were kept. Ruehl told the newspaper that had the Hamilton Fire Engine Company arrived in a timely matter, the building could have been saved, but alas the officers were “at their annual ball at New Utrecht-Town Hall, far away.” The entire structure burned to its foundations. Further compounding the unfortunate situation, Ruehl had allowed the insurance policy on the property to lapse, and could only hope that the Brooklyn Railroad City company’s \$45,000 insurance would be enough to rebuild.

2. Coney Island Elephant Hotel



A sideview of Coney Island's Elephant Hotel. Image via Wikimedia Commons ⁽²¹⁾

From 1885 until 1896, Coney Island ⁽²²⁾ had the most fantastical of hotels: the Elephant Hotel (also called the “Elephantine Colossus” or “Elephant Colossus”). It was 200-feet tall with a gilded crescent and stood proudly and prominently on Surf Avenue and West 12th street. James Lafferty designed the 12-story building with 31 rooms, even calling it the “Eighth Wonder of the World.” ⁽²³⁾

Inside the elephant was a concert hall, events bazaar, museum, observatory, cigar store, and diorama. Its legs were spiral staircases leading to higher rooms and its eyes were telescopes. But New Yorkers tired of the gimmick and according to the New York Historical Society ⁽²⁴⁾, it then became more of an “Elephant Brothel.” But even the prostitutes moved on to greener pastures, and the Elephant Colossus was pretty empty by the time a fire destroyed it in 1896.

You can read more about some of Coney Island's other bizarre attractions here. ⁽²⁵⁾

3. Oriental Hotel, Manhattan Beach



The Oriental Hotel, namesake of Oriental Boulevard, at its peak.

Ever wonder about the more exotic street names in Southern Brooklyn ⁽³¹⁾? Oriental Boulevard on Manhattan Beach is one of these handful of colorfully-named (perhaps culturally insensitive from today's perspective) streets slipped into otherwise peaceful residential areas. Walking down Oriental today lends itself to strikingly ordinary views of private residences and bits of high school property, but its name reveals what the neighborhood used to be: a hub for luxe beach resorts.

Manhattan Beach Hotel



Manhattan Beach Hotel-Brooklyn-Queen Anne Style-Austin Corbin-NYC

Imagine a strand of resort hotels nestled in white-sand beaches. Posh, scented with orange blossoms, perhaps the sort of place Dick and Nicole Diver would vacation. Now imagine it in Brooklyn ⁽³²⁾. Such a place existed just over a century ago, and the Oriental Hotel in Manhattan Beach was the crown jewel of southern Brooklyn resorts. Manhattan Beach itself was conjured up by Long Island Railroad President Austin Corbin, who coined the name in hopes to lure Manhattanites to his new resort destination. His role within the LIRR ensured that a new train line was built to Manhattan Beach.

Brighton Beach Hotel



Brighton Beach Hotel-Manhattan Beach-NYC

The Oriental Hotel was not the only grand hotel in the area⁽³³⁾. The first to be built was the Manhattan Beach Hotel, officially opened by President Ulysses S. Grant himself on July 4th, 1877. It was a popular destination for the elite of New York City, and many posh private clubs would operate out of the hotel during the summer. At the Oriental Hotel, the wealthiest of New York's residents would book extended stays for the summer:

The Brighton Beach hotel, built in 1878 (literally picked up and moved 175 yards inland by six locomotives in 1888 to counter erosion), could accommodate up to 5,000 guests but never had the success of the others – it was deemed too close to the mass entertainment at Coney Island. Gradually, the properties along the Manhattan Beach and Brighton Beach coast would be sold off for residential development.

4. Astor House



Astor House Hotel-City Hall-Demolished NYC Image via Library of Congress

Moving back to Manhattan, Astor House was the first luxury hotel in New York City ^(4.1), situated on Broadway between Barclay and Vesey Street across from City Hall ^(4.2). It had running water before the Croton Aqueduct was completed in 1842 ^(4.3), and its distinguished guests included Abraham Lincoln, who gave a speech there before his presidential election. ^(4.4) In 1913, the hotel was demolished in phases to accommodate the construction of the subway.

5. Hotel Pabst



Photo via New York Then & Now

The Pabst Hotel opened in 1899 at what is now One Times Square ^(5.1) —close to its brewery at 49th Street. The hotel, according to the New York Times ^(5.2) , had five bedrooms on each of the upper floors, and in “early 1900 the owners added a conservatory on top of the portico, an extension of the Empire-style restaurant on the second floor.” The construction of the IRT subway went through the basement of the hotel and in 1902, owner Gustave Pabst, vice president of the brewing company, sold it to Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of The New York Times. The New York Times Building was built on the same triangular plot, and still stands today, one of the emptiest but most profitable buildings ^(5.3) in Midtown. It is also where the New Year’s Eve Ball is stored. ^(5.4)

6. Hotel Astor Times Square



Hotel Astor c. 1915-1920

The Hotel Astor was the first of the grand hotels to arrive to Times Square, conceived of by William Waldorf as the next iteration of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel ^(6.1). The French-inspired building had a green copper mansard roof, a Louis XV style Rococo ballroom and a rooftop garden for entertainment, drinking and dining. The hotel was designed by New York architect Charles W. Clinton and Connecticut architect William H. Russell and built atop former farmland.

After changing ownership several times, the Hotel Astor was demolished in 1967. It lives on as an illustration on Dr. Brown's Soda cans. ^(6.2) Today, the site is home to 1 Astor Plaza, which contains MTV Studios, Viacom, and the Minskoff Theatre. Next door to the Hotel Astor was the Astor Theatre, which was demolished in 1982 and replaced by the Marriott Marquis hotel.

100 pairs of shoes found on Washington interstate highway

yahoo.com

Retrieved March 9th 2016 2:49am PST USA

<http://news.yahoo.com/100-pairs-shoes-found-washington-interstate-highway-001624153.html>

10 hours ago

AP

SEATTLE (AP) — State Department of Ecology officials say a crew picking up litter found 100 pairs of shoes in boxes along Interstate 90 east of North Bend.

KIRO-TV reports (<http://goo.gl/vxJpdt>) an Ecology Youth Corps crew found the white, flat-heeled shoes Tuesday morning.

State officials say the shoes, which appear new, have been donated to a Seattle organization that helps homeless women, children and families in need.

Associated Press

Information from: KIRO-TV, <http://www.kirotv.com/index.html>

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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11 little pigs in Albay ~may~ have been attacked by a vampire - WE THE PVBLIC

wethepvblic.comThe logo for 'WE THE PVBLIC' features the words 'WE THE' in white and 'PVBLIC' in white with a red triangle above the 'V', all on a black rectangular background.

11 little pigs in Albay ~may~ have been attacked by a vampire

By We The Pvblic -

March 4, 2016

Once upon a time, there were 11 little piglets.

One pig built a house of straw, the other one built a house of sticks. They happily sang and danced while the other piglets worked hard all day to build one with bricks.

A big bad ~possible~ vampire saw the 11 little pigs while they were doing their thing and thought, "What juicy tender meals they will make!"

And so the ~probable~ vampire did feed on them, sinking his fangs into the piglets necks.

Crisologo Soncuya, the owner of the 11 little pigs, told the local news his analysis of the bites were from fangs.

But a neighbor, Milita Neptuno, told the news she saw a dog come along and bite the piglets.

But Crisologo's wife doesn't think these bites were from a mere dog.

Do you think it was a dog? Or the ~potential ~ fangs of a vampire?

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NO. 1.—THE ROSE COLORED ARCH AT SUNSET.

The rosy sunset of November 22, 1885, photographed by Henry C. Maine, showing the rosy arch and the brilliant light below it near the sun.



NO. 2.—THE SOLAR CORONA.

The Red Light corona or halo about the sun, photographed by Henry C. Maine, at noon, November 22, 1885. The vapors near the horizon are also lighted and of considerable actinic energy. The salmon color is in the faint outer haze surrounding the central brightness.



NUESTRA SEÑORA DE JUQUILA

Il gatto macabro e sua



3 of The Most Insane Vampire Criminals Ever

clapway.com

By Tyler Jones
March 5, 2016

If the greatest mystery in the world is aliens, then vampires are right behind them. For many people, when they hear the word vampire they think of a blood sucking fictional being. Over the years, there have been numerous stories on past vampire criminals. Whether these are actually true or not is still in question, but these three vampire criminals are still insane.

FIRST VAMPIRE CRIMINAL

Countess Elizabeth Bathory was a very despicable woman who spent her life murdering women. History actually says that she would drench them in water and then leave them to freeze to death. Bathory's legend is quite fascinating, as it is said that she murdered around 650 women in her lifetime. To make this even worse, she would bath in their blood because she believed it had restorative powers. At least, this is what the legend says.

SECOND VAMPIRE CRIMINAL

The Vampire of Hanover makes its way next, and this man was plain cruel. His real name was Fritz Haarmann, and he murdered over two dozen people in around six years. To murder most of these people, he would bite them in the neck. Haarmann paid for his crimes as he was sentenced to death by guillotine. Another cool tidbit is his brain is actually kept at a medical school in Germany.

THIRD VAMPIRE CRIMINAL

Now, we turn to a man who let the fascination of blood take over his life. Richard Chase went on a killing spree in 1977 in which he murdered six people. To make matters worse, he ended up drinking the blood of all of his victims. One of the more interesting parts of his murders is he was quoted as saying he would only come into a house if the door was open. Although he was also sentenced to death, he decided to take himself out of the game by overdosing.

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30 million-year-old maps of the world?

fabweb.org



Fabweb

You are here: Home » Curious » 30 million-year-old maps of the world?

Updated on 03/05/2016 By admin 2 Comments



Fragment of the Piri Reis map. [Wikimedia Commons](#)
Oronce Finé's map, 1531. [Wikimedia Commons](#)
Hadji Ahmed's map, 1559. [Wikipedia](#)

Oronce Finé's map, 1536. [Wikimedia Commons](#)

On some ancient maps, Antarctica is illustrated as a land with no ice, and the other continents are located much differently than they are today. Those are the famous 16th century maps drawn by Piri Reis, Oronce Finé, Hadji Ahmed, and several others.

Scientists have been trying to determine at what point in time our planet looked the way it did on the ancient maps, according to geology. The results were so shocking that they still don't get mentioned to this day – Earth looked like this 24-34 million years ago...

How is this possible? How did medieval cartographers get information as to how the continents looked long before the appearance of the first human (if we are to believe the official history of mankind)?

Alexander Koltypin, independent explorer, geologist, and editor-in-chief of the internet portal "The Earth Before the Flood" (*До потопа*), analyzed the information related to the maps of ancient Earth and juxtaposed it with known geologico-geographical reconstructions. And here is what he believes.

It is possible that all the evidence in possession of historico-archeological studies is not exactly on the right track. More information can be received from the maps of ancient seafarers, to which belong the famous maps of Piri Reis, Oronce Finé, Hadji Ahmed, and a whole bunch more, that show the world far more different than it is today.

For example, ancient maps, on which the continents are located differently than they are today, are also illustrated on the Ica stones discovered in Peru. On the map drawn by Piri Reis, South America is connected with Antarctica. And on the maps of Oronce Finé and Hadji Ahmed, Antarctica is illustrated as a land entirely free of ice.

And if we take into consideration Philippe Buache's map, Antarctica is illustrated as two separate islands. According to geophysical research, today we know this to be true. But researches began in the 60s and became popular to the public at the end of the 20th century. So how did ancients know of this back in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries?



Fragment of the Piri Reis map.
Wikimedia Commons

If we adhere to the theories made by modern historians, they could not have known about this, and this seeming knowledge is only a coincidence.

After all the attempts to analyze the ancient map of Oronce Finé, scientists have dated it back to 12 millennia BC. These results go beyond the bounds of official science. As a geologist, I, too, couldn't ignore these ancient maps. And I started asking myself questions such as, why is Antarctica connected with South America? When did they split apart? When was Antarctica entirely free of ice and split into two islands? At what point in time did it have rivers?



Oronce Finé's map, 1531. Wikimedia Commons

I have found the answers to these questions in existent

paleogeological, or rather, paleogeographical reconstructions, as well as in paleoclimatic reconstructions which also show the location of the continents.

According to different sources, South America and Antarctica split either 24 or 34 million years ago. Antarctica existed as two islands more than 30 million years ago. And Antarctica, free of ice, existed about 25 million years ago – I am not talking about a specific time frame, just a rough estimate.

And then, 16 million years ago, almost full ice coverage began on Antarctica and it resembled today's continent a bit more, and 5 million years ago – it was entirely covered in thick ice and was the same as it is today.

Here is what geological data shows.

If we believe that ancient cartographers were suddenly motivated, then the illustrations were copied from much older maps, which by some miracle have survived for 30 million years.

We read in the Mahabharata, the Rigveda, and in Vaishvanara of a race of space aliens, and in the Book of Enoch, these creatures are guards who descended to Earth and cartographed it.



Hadji Ahmed's map, 1559. Wikipedia

The maps are descriptive enough, but also contain depictions of near Earth objects, so it is quite possible that these maps actually did exist millions of years ago and in some way, even after all the natural disasters, they were preserved, possibly in some underground structures, and somehow ended up in the hands of ancient cartographers, who did not use them but rather just copied them and made their geographical discoveries based on the copies.

But the maps were not entirely accurate since the outlines of Earth at that time have not changed significantly in the last 20 million years, but they have changed. That is why sometimes mistakes were made and other times – unexpected discoveries.

I believe this to be a wonderful example of when one is working at the border of geology and folklore and this allows for the deciphering of the mysterious maps.

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THE ISLAND AND VOLCANO OF KRAKATOA, STRAIT OF SUNDA, SUBMERGED DURING THE LATE ERUPTION.—[See Page 614.]



the University, and of other talented persons, to whose presence the anticipated utility of Austria relied for this and similar.

All these thronged the sunny drawing-rooms on the second floor of the "Englische Palast"; and the reflection that there was safety in numbers did not prevent me from being silently jealous of each and every one of them. My own position was neither dignified nor agreeable. Being in some sort a member of the household, I was used by Lady Constantine much as the wives of courtiers generally are in the habit of using their husbands' aides-de-camp. I was ordered to ring the bell; I was sent to look for this or that person's carriage; I fetched and carried, in short, and got nothing in the shape of reward, except a smile or a word every now and again. Sometimes I thought that she took a delight in humbling me, though I can not say that her manner betrayed any such deliberate intention. I did not like it; but I grinned and took it,

restrained by an inward conviction that, sooner or later, my day would come.

A circumstance which went me a good deal was the sudden appearance upon the scene of Mr. Balthazar, who took up his quarters in the best hotel in the town, and immediately resumed those patient stage operations which had for their object the ultimate conquest of Lady Constantine's hand and heart. Little as I loved this dogged wooer, I could not refuse a gratifying tribute of admiration to his unrelenting pertinacity. It was not often that he took advantage as he had done in Yaurimur; but then it was not often that Lady Constantine laughed at him. She turned him away from her door full twice for every once that she admitted him; she scolded or took no notice of him when he had succeeded in effecting an entrance; but he cared for none of these things. He meant to win, and really it almost looked as if he would win in the long-

Cairo court sentences 4-year-old boy to life in jail for murder

jpost.com

By YASSER OKBI/ MAARIV HASHAVUA \

02/18/2016 17:38

Child was listed as "wanted" for murder, disturbance of the peace and damaging state property in an indictment together with 115 other defendants sentenced to life imprisonment.

In a bizarre move, a court in western Cairo this week sentenced a four-year-old boy to life in prison on various heinous charges, including murder.

The child, Ahmed Mansour Karni, received the lengthy prison term Tuesday after being convicted in absentia of offenses that allegedly occurred two years ago, when he was a mere two-years-old.

The boy was listed as "wanted" for murder, disturbance of the peace and damaging state property in an indictment that listed 115 other defendants sentenced to life imprisonment.

According to the indictment, the exorbitant charges against the youngster include four counts of murder, eight counts of attempted murder, vandalizing property belonging to the Egyptian Health Administration in his home province of el-Fayoum (located some 70 kilometers southwest of Cairo), threatening soldiers and police officers and damaging vehicles belonging to security forces.

One defense attorney added that he had presented the child's birth certificate to the court, however "it appeared that the court did not transfer the material."

Lawyer Faisal a-Sayd charged that the presiding judge had not reviewed the case.

"The child Ahmed Mansour Karni's birth certificate was presented after state security forces added his name to the list of accused, but then the case was transferred to the military court and the child was sentenced in absentia in an ensuing court hearing," said the defense attorney.

"This proves that the judge did not read the case," he added.

Another Egyptian lawyer Mohammed Abu Hurira issued a fiery response, writing: "On the eve of injustice and madness in Egypt, a four-year-old child was sentenced to life imprisonment. He is accused of disturbance, damage to property and murder. The Egyptian scales of justice are not reversible. There is no justice in Egypt. No reason. Logic committed suicide a while ago. Egypt went crazy. Egypt is ruled by a bunch of lunatics."

The sentencing also caused a firestorm on social media networks, with users blasting the Egyptian legal system and government of corruption and injustice.

The blogger and wife of Egyptian human rights activist Nibin Melek wrote in a post that the sentencing "was a blind decision."

The court order came less than a year after a blind man in Egypt received a 15-year prison sentence for the shooting of a police officer.

THE JERUSALEM POST

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The Jerusalem Post - Israel News

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5 Ghosts of Mississippi Past | Visit Mississippi

October 21, 2015

visitmississippi.org



With such a vast amount of culture and history, a state like Mississippi is full of legends, ghost stories and accounts of supernatural encounters. We've gathered a list of some popular Mississippi haunts in each region, as we're gearing up for the spookiest time of the year. Of course, these are just a few. You can find local legends in each of the five regions of our state.

1. Delta - Rolling Fork, Mont Helena

Mont Helena, a colonial revival, 10,000-square-foot home in Rolling Fork, has a long-running reputation for being haunted. Built as the retirement home for Helen and George Harris in 1896, the home sits atop a ceremonial Indian mound in the Delta region. During its early years, Mont Helena was one of the premier homes of the Delta. Locals recount stories of sighting of a lady dressed in a white gown looking out of windows or standing in the front yard. The property has been investigated by the Mississippi Paranormal Society, with recorded electronic voice phenomena captured, shadowed figures seen, and orbs seen in photos.

2. Coastal – Pascagoula, Bellevue (a.k.a. "The Longfellow House")

Located on Beach Boulevard in Pascagoula, The Longfellow House was



home to former slave trader Daniel Smith Graham. The home is reportedly haunted by ghosts of abused and murdered slaves. Their spirits are said to have stayed on, causing mischief in the form of slamming doors, items being thrown about and other ghostly happenings. The house was turned into a girl's school, a private home, and then a hotel, owned by Ingalls Shipbuilding. It's believed that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow stayed there and wrote "The Building of the Ship" while a guest. Most of the strangest experiences occurred when the house was used as a hotel.



3. *Capital/River – Natchez, King's Tavern*



Featured on an episode of Ghost Adventures, King's Tavern in Natchez is well known for being the city's – and possibly the state's – oldest

standing building. The tavern and inn are still in business today. Local legend says that, in the 1930s, workers were performing a renovation on the tavern's fireplace when they discovered a space behind the wall holding the remains of three bodies. One of the bodies was said to have been the mistress of the tavern's original owner. Guests report seeing images in the tavern's mirrors and hearing a crying baby in the restaurant.

4. *Hills – Oxford, Rowan Oak*



Home of esteemed writer William Faulkner, Rowan Oak is one of Mississippi's top literary attractions. The white, Greek revival style home was built in the mid-1800s and has been preserved just as Faulkner left it. The tale that goes along with Rowan Oak is that of Judith Sheegog, the only daughter of the home's original owner, who fell to her death from her bedroom balcony and was buried on property. Many locals attribute Judith Sheegog's tale to Faulkner himself. Faulkner's own spirit is said to roam the

halls as well, and has been seen writing on the wall in his office.

5. *Pines – Columbus, Friendship Cemetery*

Established in 1849, Friendship Cemetery includes local citizens and soldiers who fell at the Civil War Battle of Shiloh in 1862. A Confederate soldier is said to still walk through the military section of the cemetery. Visitors to the cemetery are also attracted to the weeping angel that stands over the grave of the Reverend Thomas Teasdale. People grasping the angel's hand have remarked that it feels lifelike.

Notable mentions



Vicksburg Military Park – It's said that Vicksburg National Military Park still plays hosts to the soldiers of the past. Visitors have reported hearing sounds of battle, cannon fire, horses, orders being issued, and screams of the wounded, over the empty fields. Ghosts of troops are spotted along the tree line or walking the grounds. There are even reports of the smell of smoke and gunpowder.

Waynesboro Shubuta Road a.k.a. Devil Worshiper Road – Many local stories

surround the history of this road in Waynesboro; some believe the haunting is a result of satanic cult sacrifices that allegedly happened in the area. The area also has the legend of Goat Man, a farmer who sold his soul to the devil and was transformed into a demonic creature. Reports of car engines turning off, the appearance of shadowy figures, shaking of cars and handprints on windows have been made in the area. Others claim to have seen Goat Man himself.

Stuckey's Bridge - Legend has it that a man by the name of Stuckey ran a local inn in the city of Enterprise, and frequently robbed and murdered his guests. After killing several customers, Stuckey was finally caught and hanged from the bridge. Visitors to the area have reported seeing the ghost of Stuckey roaming the riverbank with a lantern in hand while other have reported seeing his ghost hanging from the bridge.

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7 of York's most haunted places

Thursday 29 October 2015

yorkpress.co.uk

THE PRESS

York Press

7 of York's most haunted places



The Golden Fleece



The Treasurer's House

IT'S been described as the most haunted city in Europe. Now, as Hallowe'en approaches, Mike Laycock delves in The Press archives to examine seven of York's ghostliest places - many of which sell spirits...

The Golden Fleece in Pavement is reputed to be York's most haunted hostelry but The Press reported in



2002 how a relief bar manager thought it was a 'load of mumbo jumbo for the tourist' when she was appointed ... That was until she started feeling, seeing and hearing things, such as an apparition moving across the bar and through the

wall, footsteps and what sounded like a bunch of old keys rattling when she was alone in the pub, and an icy hand brushing up her spine. "I didn't turn off the light for two weeks, I was so scared," she said. Many guests are said to have reported seeing a ghostly woman wandering the corridors and staircases in the small hours in the former coaching inn. She is believed to be Lady Alice Peckitt, wife of one of York's Lord Mayors and former resident of the house next door.

The Treasurers' House near York Minster is the setting for one of the city's most famous ghost tales. In 1953, the late plumber Harry Martindale was installing central heating in the cellars when he heard the sound of a distant horn, gradually becoming louder, before a carthorse emerged through the brick wall, followed by a legion of Roman soldiers which

looked to be walking on their knees. He later discovered an old Roman road, the Via Decumana, was buried 15 inches below the floor of the house.

Spooky goings on at the Roman Bath in St Sampson's Square reputedly led a manager to refuse to stay on there some 25 years ago. Two men sleeping in the bath for charity were said to have seen a blinding light fill the room and the shape of a figure. The light was seen again days later, and faded as though sucked into a hole. The Press reported in 2003 that this was the only sighting, although noises of footsteps and of somebody washing were regularly reported.

The Snickleway in Goodramgate has claimed to be the "Most Haunted Pub in Britain", with resident spirits said to include a dark, brooding presence of "great and utter evil" in the cellar. There is also an elderly gentleman in an old-fashioned suit who has apparently been seen walking in through the pub's back wall.

The Black Swan in Peaseholme Green - a Victorian workman in a bowler hat apparently likes to sit here fidgeting and tutting, before gradually fading away, and a pair of legs without a body attached are said to have been spotted in the pub's private quarter

At Ye Olde Starre Inne, Stonegate, the ghostly wails of civil war soldiers are said to sometimes echo around the pub.


And at the Punch Bowl in Stonegate, there's allegedly the ghost of a former landlord killed in a fire after getting trapped in the cellar, and also the spirit of a young woman strangled by a drunk. Then there's a woman said to float behind the bar at an angle, listing over at about 25 degrees, who may just have returned to the pub to look for her lover.

*Is your pub - or home - haunted? Email mike.laycock@thepress.co.uk.

7 of York's most haunted places


Oxen 7:31am Fri 30 Oct 15

Not including Sonja Crisp haunted by a tweeting old hag? Or Pedalling Paul haunted by a spurned wannabe lover who copies his name and follows him around like a lovestruck puppy?

 SRT_CM Oxen 1:26pm Fri 30 Oct 15
Ref

You're doing a better job of haunting the comments sections with your two favourite topics, NPP and some odd sense of loyalty to Crisp.

Wooooooooooooooooo...

 Ichabod76 SRT_CM 4:07pm Fri 30 Oct 15
Ref

Oxen and Sonja Crisp seem to be cut from the same cloth, Both are nasty vindictive people.

 notpedallingpaul Oxen 5:03pm Fri 30 Oct 15

Ref

Oxen, you're not the now out of work "mark down monkey" are you? and you are now so bitter and twisted that you can't make your masters look as though they are the dogs b0llocks anymore, so now your small sad twisted mind can only insult and slander me.

M_H 11:14am Fri 30 Oct 15

Try Popworld about 2am on a Saturday morning.

Plenty of horrors in there.

THEWZZARD 12:03pm Fri 30 Oct 15

A good way to drum up pub trade at Halloween!

holden79 12:41pm Fri 30 Oct 15

There is no such thing as ghosts. There is no afterlife. No-one has an everlasting 'soul'. These are all delusions that humans have thought up and bought into over the ages because we are hard-wired to increase our chances of survival by fearing death, subsequently bypassing that fear by inventing an afterlife. It isn't helped by the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is - we cannot realistically imagine what death is like any more than we can be expected to imagine what it is like to not be born yet. Stitch in the fact that Heaven/Hell provides a mechanism for judgement that otherwise might elude us in life, and the deal is sealed. So there you are - that's mortality for you. Ghost stories are just for thick people.

Score: 1

 eeoodares holden79 4:10pm Fri 30 Oct 15

Ref

"...the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is."

Reading the outpouring of your intellect, is bringing me closer to perceiving what 'nothing' really is. Thank you.

"...the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is." Reading the outpouring of your intellect, is bringing me closer to perceiving what 'nothing' really is. Thank you.

eeoodares

"...the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is."

Reading the outpouring of your intellect, is bringing me closer to perceiving what 'nothing' really is. Thank you.

 holden79 eeoodares 10:32pm Fri 30 Oct 15

Ref

[quote][p][b]eeoodares[/b] wrote: "...the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what

"nothing" is." Reading the outpouring of your intellect, is bringing me closer to perceiving what 'nothing' really is. Thank you.[/p][/]The fact you are actually starting to consider the concept is thanks enough for me. Have a little go at perceiving not existing (either post-death or pre-birth) and then come back at me with another 'clever' sound bite. And, while, you're at it, you, could also, ask a friend, to explain how and when, to use a comma. holden79

Ref Emperor Palpatine holden79 10:48am Mon 2 Nov 15

holden79 wrote...

There is no such thing as ghosts. There is no afterlife. No-one has an everlasting 'soul'. These are all delusions that humans have thought up and bought into over the ages because we are hard-wired to increase our chances of survival by fearing death, subsequently bypassing that fear by inventing an afterlife. It isn't helped by the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is - we cannot realistically imagine what death is like any more than we can be expected to imagine what it is like to not be born yet. Stitch in the fact that Heaven/Hell provides a mechanism for judgement that otherwise might elude us in life, and the deal is sealed. So there you are - that's mortality for you. Ghost stories are just for thick people.

Holden79 you are not in possession of the Secrets of the Universe, your opinion is not fact and the only amazing things here are your arrogance and stupidity.

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holden79 wrote...

There is no such thing as ghosts. There is no afterlife. No-one has an everlasting 'soul'. These are all delusions that humans have thought up and bought into over the ages because we are hard-wired to increase our chances of survival by fearing death, subsequently bypassing that fear by inventing an afterlife. It isn't helped by the fact that we are incapable of perceiving what "nothing" is - we cannot realistically imagine what death is like any more than we can be expected to imagine what it is like to not be born yet. Stitch in the fact that Heaven/Hell provides a mechanism for judgement that otherwise might elude us in life, and the deal is sealed. So there you are - that's mortality for you. Ghost stories are just for thick people.

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holden79 12:54pm Fri 30 Oct 15

.....oh and while I'm at it, why are all these places really old? Do ghosts only like old buildings? Something not 'ghostly' enough about newer buildings? It's almost as if the interior of these places more closely resembles what might be seen in ghost films, or described in books about hauntings, and this sets the scene for some irrational human to misinterpret a noise they hear, or something they 'sense' as a g-g-g-g-ghost.....!

holden79 1:06pm Fri 30 Oct 15

...there must have been something supernatural about the 8 pints I necked last night - as they've been haunting me all day. Anyway, you don't often get outdoor ghosts do you? Can caves be haunted? Just wondering if cavemen bought into all this or whether they were too busy hunting/gathering/pr
ocreating to worry themselves about it, because I imagine caves could be quite scary really.

SRT_CM 1:27pm Fri 30 Oct 15

^ Your host for this afternoon, Mr. Buzz Killington...

BigJon 5:00pm Fri 30 Oct 15

What's the difference between a hostelry and a pub? How can the Golden Fleece be the most haunted hostelry AND The Snickleway be the most haunted pub when they're both the same thing?

DeeJaiEss 5:28pm Fri 30 Oct 15

Maybe the new Hiscox building will be haunted by the aforementioned Victorian workman - I am sure he will be tutting when he sees what has been built on his doorstep.

gravitydrips 8:23pm Fri 30 Oct 15

The most haunted place in York is neither a pub or a particularly old building. It's York Hospital. Numerous sightings and experiences by both patients and staff of numerous different ghosts.

petesmuk 12:52am Sat 31 Oct 15

Only a very wealthy ghost could afford the bar prices charged at the Golden Fleece.

j brooky 10:43am Sat 31 Oct 15

Been going in the golden fleece on and of for the last 30yrs and for the first time last yr unexpectedly I came across the same ghost twice, quite a scary experience, definitely one of the most haunted pubs in York j brooky

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A few facts about leap day

12news.com

Everything you need to know about Leap Year!

Rachel Kuipers and USA TODAY , KPNX9:55 AM. MST February 29, 2016



Surrounded in history and superstition, February 29 only comes once every four years— and we have one Monday. Here are a few facts about leap day.

Bachelor's Day

In Ireland, February 29 is Bachelor's Day - a traditional holiday when women propose to men. Scotland began the tradition in 1288 by passing a law permitting women to propose and if refused, the man had to pay a fine. Now, the tradition is just an amusing historical

tidbit.

2. Gregorian calendar roots

Pope Paul III, the last of the Renaissance popes, was born on a leap day in 1468. Interestingly enough, it was another pope who established the Gregorian calendar - Pope Gregory XIII.

Julius Caesar introduced the idea, but the math he used wasn't quite right, creating too many leap years. Essentially, every 400 years, we ended up with three extra days, so to compensate, centuries must be divisible by 400 to count as leap years. Years like 1700, 1800 and 1900 are only 365 days long, rather than 366.

LEAP DAY BY THE NUMBERS



It takes Earth **365.242 days** to orbit the sun — and those extra hours count!



When a leap year is added **every four years**, the calendar is still off by a **few minutes**.



To fix that, only centuries **divisible by 400** are leap years. That means that **1700, 1800 and 1900** were not leap years.

draft

USA TODAY

Leap day babies

The chances of having a birthday on a leap day are about one in 1,461, according to BBC.

Leap year babies, called leaplings, are said to have unusual talents by astrologers.

Two women have given birth to three leap day babies, according to the New York Daily News. The Henriksen family from Norway had their children on leap days in 1960, 1964 and 1968. The most recent family to tie the record is the Estes family from Utah. Their children were born in 2004, 2008 and 2012. So, depending on how you look at it, the children will celebrate their third, second and first

birthdays this year.

Even more rare, the eighth premier of Tasmania, James Milne Wilson, was born on a leap day and died on a leap day in the 1800s, according to the World Heritage Encyclopedia.

February 29 in history

In order to gain the cooperation of the indigenous people of Jamaica, Christopher Columbus used the lunar eclipse on February 29, 1504, to his advantage, according to the BBC. The local chiefs decided to stop helping his crew with the food and provisions they had been supplying, so he told them that God was going to punish them by painting the moon red. During the eclipse, Columbus said God would end the punishment if they cooperated. The chiefs agreed to continue giving them supplies, and of course the lunar eclipse ended.

The first warrants of the Salem witch trials were issued on February 29, 1692. The trials continued until early 1693 and resulted in the execution of 20 people and the death of seven others in jail, History.com reported.

On February 29, 1940, Hattie McDaniel became the first black woman to win an Oscar, according to History.com. She was awarded for her role in *Gone With the Wind*.

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The Battle over Bodies: A History of Criminal Dissection

thechirurgeonsapprentice.com

Feb23 by The Chirurgeon's Apprentice



—100

On 29 July 1831, John Amy Bird Bell was found guilty of murdering a young boy for the sake of a few coins. At his trial, Bell expressed no emotion when he was sentenced to death. He did, however, break down when he was informed that his body would be given over to the surgeons to be dissected.

Bell was only 14-years-old when he was executed and

anatomized. As he made his way to the gallows, he turned to the constable and asked: "He [the murdered child] is better off than I am now, do you not think he is, sir?" The constable agreed.

The Murder Act of 1752 decreed that the bodies of all murderers—young and old—be anatomized as an additional punishment for the heinous crime of taking another person's life. Most of the criminal bodies harvested for dissection came from Tyburn in London, a place of execution since the 12th century.



NB2

Locals called the permanent scaffold there "the deadly nevergreen," the tree which bore fruit all year long. It consisted of three posts—each ten to twelve feet high—held together by three wooden crossbars at the top. Between 1169 (when the first recorded execution took place) and 1783 (when hangings were moved to Newgate Prison), an estimated 40,000-60,000 died at Tyburn. Amongst these were Perkin Warbeck (1499), pretender to the throne; Francis Dereham (1541), Queen Catherine Howard's lover; and Jack Sheppard (1724), the notorious thief and escape artist.

The public's desire for justice did not necessarily include a desire to see the criminal body dissected. Most believed the body was sacred and should remain intact after death. A sketch made in 1782 by the artist, Thomas Rowlandson, depicts the interior of William Hunter's anatomical museum on the Last Day of Judgment as resurrected corpses bewilderingly search for missing body parts [See below]. As comical as this may seem, fears about what happened to one's body after death were very real during this period. Many people believed

that the execution itself was punishment enough and that the body of a criminal should not suffer the final indignity of dissection.



L0016844 'Museum... in Windmill Street, on the last Day'.

After the passage of the Murder Act, Tyburn became a battleground between the surgeons who needed to procure corpses for dissection and the mob who fought ferociously to protect the dead. Samuel Richardson, writing in 1740, described such a scene:

As soon as the poor creatures were half-dead, I was much surprised before such a number of peace-officers, to see the populace fall to hauling and pulling the carcasses with so much

earnestness, as to occasion several warm rencounters [sic], and broken heads. These were the friends of the persons executed...and some persons sent by private surgeons to obtain bodies for dissection. The contests between these were fierce and bloody, and frightful to look at. [1]

Before the day of reckoning, the condemned went to great lengths to protect their bodies from the dissection table. They appealed to family, friends, lovers and acquaintances. Martin Gray begged his uncle to come to his execution in 1721, "lest his Body should be cut, and torn, and mangled after Death." [2] Sarah Wilmhurst, who was convicted of murdering her bastard child in 1743, was more concerned that her father and brother would fail to secure her body after the execution than with the prospects of death itself. [3] Most telling of all was a plea made by Vincent Davis, who was condemned to die after murdering his wife, Elizabeth, "by giving her with a Knife one mortal Wound in the Right Side of the Breast." During his consignment, Davis

...sent many Letters to all his former Friends and Acquaintance to form a Company, and prevent the Surgeons in their Designs upon his Body... So great were these Apprehensions that he should be Anatomiz'd, that...he desired and wish'd he might be hang'd in Chains to prevent it, and with that view affronted the Court of Justice. [4]

The court did not acquiesce to his pleas. On the day of execution, however, Davis's friends fought the surgeons for his body and won. He was later buried in Clerkenwell. [5]

These battles were not for the faint-hearted. Accounts from the Barber Surgeon's Company reveal how violent scenes around the gallows could become. An entry from 1739 records: "Paid the Beadles for their being beaten

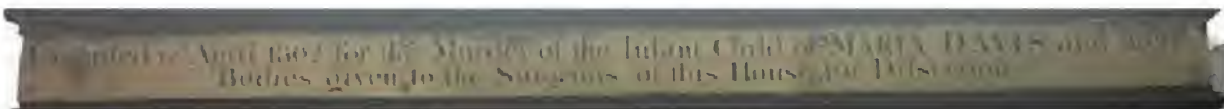


NB3

and wounded at the late execution £4.4.0.” Another entry from 1740 reads: “Paid for mending the windows broke upon bringing the last body from Tyburn. £0.6.0.” In one record we discover that the “dead man’s clothes...were lost in the scuffle.” The hangman who had procured the body thus required 15 pence compensation as the clothes of the executed rightly belonged to him. [6]

Eventually, “the deadly nevergreen” was taken down after the last criminal—John Austin—was hanged there on 3 November 1783. From that point forward, hangings took place just outside the walls of the Newgate Prison. Given the close proximity of Surgeon’s Hall to the site of execution, it was easier for surgeons to procure bodies

for dissection away from the prying eyes of an angry crowd.



tumblr_midn0fROZ31qasg9no1_1280

Nonetheless, surgeons continued to be the object of public loathing and ridicule well into the 19th century. On 19 April 1828, *The London Medical Gazette* reported:

The practice of dissection seems repugnant to the strongest prejudices of the people in this country; a repugnance which is by no means limited to the lower classes of the community, but which at present pervades nearly all, and which has unfortunately been increased, if not originally produced, by dissection having been made to constitute part of the punishment of the most aggravated felonies, and thus associated in the public mind with crime and degradation. [7]

It wasn’t until the Anatomy Act of 1832—when the bodies of the unclaimed poor were made available—that the links between dissection and punishment were formally severed. Unfortunately, in the minds of many, the executioner and surgeon would remain bound together for some time.

One executed the body, the other executed the law.

1. Samuel Richardson, *Familiar Letters on Important Occasions* (1928), p. 219.
2. *The Ordinary’s Account*, 3 April 1721
3. *The Ordinary’s Account*, 18 May 1743.
4. *The Ordinary’s Account*, 30 April 1725.
5. Peter Linebaugh, “The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons,” in *Albion’s Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (1975; repr. 1988), p. 81. I am hugely indebted to Linebaugh for information found in this blog post.
6. S. Young, *Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (1890).
7. *The London Medical Gazette* (19 April 1828).

This entry was posted in Casebooks and tagged 19th century, anatomy, criminal, Death, dissection, execution, Histmed, history, lindsey fitzharris, Medical History, the surgeon's apprentice.

6 comments on "The Battle over Bodies: A History of Criminal Dissection"



1. Nursing Clio Sunday Morning Medicine says:
February 28, 2016 at 6:12 PM

[...] A history of criminal dissection. [...]



2. Mary Jean Adams says:
February 23, 2016 at 7:50 PM

Kind of sad that the poor with no family or friends end up getting treated worse than the murderers.



3. Mary Jean Adams says:
February 23, 2016 at 7:49 PM

Kind of sad that the poor with no family and friends end up getting worse treatment than the murderers.



4. David Purcell says:
February 23, 2016 at 7:16 PM

Doc as always a fantastic post! Thank you as always for your outstanding work!!



5. kerberos616 says:
February 23, 2016 at 5:12 PM

Reblogged this on Kerberos616.



6. coldhandboyack says:
February 23, 2016 at 2:25 PM

Another great post.

AUTHOR: DR LINDSEY FITZHARRIS

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Kenyan 'vampire' who killed a lady, ate her flesh and drank her blood to appear in court again

tuko.co.ke

Retrieved: March 5th 2016 8:17pm PST USA

A Kenyan 'vampire' who confessed to eating human flesh to appear in court again

Tonny Ndungu Yesterday



Geoffrey Matheri appearing at the Naivasha law courts on November 10, 2011. Photo: The star

– Kenyan 'vampire' who confessed to mutilating, eating human flesh and drinking blood from his victims has a case to answer, Nakuru court has determined

– The suspect, Geoffrey Matheri has already served his four years jail term after he was found guilty of having murdered Miriam Wairimu on August 29, 2008

Nakuru High Court judge Maureen Odero has determined that Geoffrey Matheri has a case to answer on the counts of kidnapping that he appeared in court to answer to.

Seven years ago, Geoffrey Matheri 'Fongo', was catapulted to infamy after his gory confession that he was a serial killer. In his chilling confession, Fongo narrated of his appetite for human flesh and blood.

Fongo was arraigned in court and charged with the murder of Miriam Wairimu on Friday, August 29, 2008.

Evaluation of the serial killer by a psychiatrist revealed that he was of sound mind and was fit to appear in court. He attended the court sessions and in November, 2011, a Naivasha court found him guilty of murder. He was convicted to four years. He has already served his term.

A Nakuru court on Friday, March 4 ruled that the self confessed vampire has a case on Kidnapping to answer. Witnesses at the court recounted how Fongo had kidnapped his victims before mutilating their bodies and drinking their blood.

If he is found guilty in subsequent hearings, he will be incarcerated yet again.

His case of trial-within-trial is a move by the court to unravel the mystery of the self-confessed serial killer. The family of his victims hope that the man will be dealt with by the law and made to pay for his crimes.

Fongo confesses that he was introduced to the cult a bishop from Naivasha town. The



Geoffrey Matheri appearing at the Naivasha law courts on November 10, 2011. Photo: The star

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bishop had promised to pay for his studies if he would be part of a demonic cult. Faced with a struggle to get basic needs leave alone money for college, Matheri took the bait.

Every day, he would deliver to the bishop, a pint of blood from his victims. He would be paid KSh 25,000 on delivery. A tidy sum that he used to lure his victims into his lair for the satanic ritual.

image source:<http://www.the-star.co.ke/>

Source: Standard DigitalTuko.co.ke news

Leap year fear: a literary history of women proposing marriage

Moira Redmond

Monday 29 February 2016

theguardian.com

Polly Toynbee

Leap year fear: a literary history of women proposing marriage

Bachelor's Day comes once every four years, but women in books – from the Wife of Bath to Persuasion's Anne Elliot – have often made their intentions clear



'I made my proposal' ... Mia Wasikowska and Michael Fassbender in the 2011 BBC film of Jane Eyre.

Photograph: c.Focus/Everett/Rex Features Left to right, Polly (Megan Dodds) and Fanny (Rosamund Pike) in the BBC TV adaptation of Love in A Cold Climate.

Photograph: Joss Barratt/BBC ONE Emily Blunt in the film adaptation of The Girl on the Train, due out later this year.

Today is 29 February, so it is Bachelor's Day: the one day every four years where women are encouraged to ask men to marry them. Aside from the newspaper stunts every leap year, there don't seem to be many actual instances of this happening in popular culture. It is the case in literature, too: it is simply rare to find women in books proposing marriage any day of the year.

There are a few: Catherine Arrowpoint in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* says the decisive word to her beau, Herr Klesmer: "Why should I not marry the man who loves me, if I love him?" To her the effort was something like the leap from the deck into the lifeboat. Polly in Nancy Mitford's *Love in a Cold Climate* asks Boy to marry her – "I always

knew that I should have to do the proposing, and I did" – but the less said about that marriage the better (never mind women proposing to men, who thinks marrying their lechy uncle is a great idea?).



Leap year proposals: how I proposed to my boyfriend

Kelly Bowerbank decided to propose to her boyfriend this leap year, but she struggled to come up with romantic ideas. Have you proposed to a man - or been proposed to by a woman?

Even if they don't do the proposing, there is a consistent thread of strong women pushing

to make their intentions clear in life and literature. In the Old Testament, a widow and her

mother-in-law conspire to put the younger woman in the way of Boaz, who will marry her and assure their future. Many of Shakespeare's heroines could be quite fearless in pursuit of love – Juliet, Viola in *Twelfth Night*, and Rosalind in *As You Like It* all find their husbands without waiting around to be chosen.

The Wife of Bath in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is forward and flirtatious and openly picks out her fifth husband at the funeral of the fourth ("As help me God, I was a lusty one"). Tatiana writes an honest letter to Pushkin's snottish Eugene Onegin: he is not receptive to her declaration of love, but you have to admire her chutzpah for making it. Flora in Stella Gibbons's *Cold Comfort Farm* realises who she wants and summons him, while Rose in Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle* has no difficulty pushing Simon to propose, even if she doesn't marry him in the end.



Left to right, Polly (Megan Dodds) and Fanny (Rosamund Pike) in the BBC TV adaptation of *Love in a Cold Climate*. Photograph: Joss Barratt/BBC ONE
Emily Blunt in the film adaptation of *The Girl on the Train*, due out later this year.

Anne Elliot in Jane Austen's *Persuasion* is particularly crafty: despite being persuaded out of marriage by an older friend, her passionate speech at the end, delivered with a raised voice to let the gent concerned know she is keen, is a genius way of keeping her feminine delicacy while putting her balls on the line. Austen originally had her express her feelings in a letter but changed her mind, and gave Anne her brave words at the end so she could make her position clear to her longtime love.

While untraditional in many other ways, Jane Eyre accepts a very traditional first proposal by Mr

Rochester in Charlotte Brontë's novel: but by the end Jane makes all the moves, saying plainly that she had "made my proposal [of moving in with him] from the idea that he wished and would ask me to be his wife".

You might expect that as the world loosened up in the 60s and 70s there would be more occurrences of women proposing in fiction, but that didn't happen. Young people had other choices now – premarital sex, de facto living arrangements – and marriage became less of an end in itself. Writers like Margaret Drabble, Iris Murdoch and AS Byatt wrote about women who wanted more out of life: love and marriage had their place, but so did careers, knowledge and children. Angela Carter's fiction was full of women who were constrained by their time and position, but found a way to do what they wanted; again, marriage wasn't high on that list. Helen Fielding's iconic noughties heroine Bridget Jones couldn't be more different from Carter's defiantly unconventional heroines, with her determination to settle down and longing for a partner, but she remained a woman who acted, who sought a future for herself that was her own. You can actually imagine Bridget proposing marriage to Darcy – but probably by mistake and definitely at the wrong moment.

More recently, the latest craze for toxic marriage thrillers show some less admirable women manipulating their way through relationships – the *Gone Girls*, the *Girls on Trains*. (Harriet



Left to right, Polly (Megan Dodds) and Fanny (Rosamund Pike) in the BBC TV adaptation of *Love in a Cold Climate*. Photograph: Joss Barratt/BBC ONE
Emily Blunt in the film adaptation of *The Girl on the Train*, due out later this year.

Lane's Alys, Always is a particularly good example.) For better or worse: not all these women are right, or lucky, or well-intentioned, but at least they are shown as having power and self-determination, challenging the old literary cliché of a high-pitched simpering: "Oh but Lord Insert-name-here, this is so sudden!"

But there must be many more examples of women's proposals and indirect proposals in books – add your favourite ones in the comments.

comments (24)

- janeite1
11h ago

In Trollope's *Phineas Finn*, Madame Max Goesler proposes to Phineas, but because he is bound in honour to Mary Flood back home, he cannot accept and cannot tell her why. But to go on to tell how it all works out in the end would require even more spoilers ...

- clothesinbooksjaneite1
6h ago

I haven't read that one, but you've certainly made it sound appealing, I must add it to my list...

- ZIZI1001
14h ago

I was listening to Ashkenazy playing Chopin Nocturne in C sharp Minor (No.20) while reading this article. It brought the stinging tears of pent up confusion to my eyes.

- Garboventures
15h ago

'Shadow of the Moon' by MM Kaye is a silly, historical romance, only really worth reading for the Indian context and it's evocation of the era of the sepoy rebellion, so I was utterly gobsmacked when the rather dreary 'Mary Sue' heroine (Winter) suddenly popped the question to the hero (Alex)!

- clothesinbooksGarboventures
6h ago

A really unexpected one is a valuable addition to the list, thanks....

- Tamar123

16h ago

Why does our free extra day have to be on a Monday?

- Clayton Emery

18h ago

In America, to the previous generation, it's "Sadie Hawkins Day" from Lil' Abner. The day Lil' Abner has to hide from Daisy Mae and other "gals". Even immortalized in dance in the Broadway play "Dogpatch".

- clothesinbooksClayton Emery

6h ago

When I lived in the USA I came across Sadie Hawkins dances, which I eventually worked out were events where the girls asked the boys...

- iain86

20h ago

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our community standards. Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see our FAQs.

- ID4248252

20h ago

sorry 29th of the 2nd. ime as bad as them...lol

- emessbe

20h ago

Vivian (Lane?) proposes to her desired husband in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's The Crux.

- clothesinbooksemessbe

19h ago

I've not read that - excellent addition to the list, thanks!

- ID4248252

20h ago

i wish someone would tell google that its 28th of the 2nd not 29th of the 1st on their animation.

- Brackers_ ID4248252

19h ago

It's the day between the 28th Feb and 1st Mar which is what the animation is showing...

- longest987Brackers_
17h ago

I bet they feel daft now

- PanchoVillaLives
20h ago

There's "Leap Year" a 2010 film about an annoying American girl getting fed up waiting for her NYC doctor BF to propose, so she decides to travel to Dublin to propose to him on 29th when he's at a swank international conference. The plan goes wrong and cue loads of irritating Oirishry and scenery put together by the Galway Tourist Board.

- thebigchil
20h ago

Should be a bank holiday.

- spitnswordus
21h ago

The reason that women have not done the proposing in the past has more to do with capital constraints than gender itself. Now that there are far more women in the higher professions earning a life time income of say £5m, nothing can be easier than for them to propose to a younger man who is prepared to be houseman for them. I dont suppose any couple would shout about such arrangement, but it is surely much more common now!

Women having the resources to buy a gigolo for the night, is surely also much more frequent than in the past for the same reason. (a preserve of the Italians until recently!!)

- hdtvdalyspitnswordus
16h ago

The fast paced 19th century Irish song Cailleach an tAirgead (The witch of money) deals with this phenomenon of old women with land and money as a result of their husbands dying during the famine getting themselves some hot young ass in exchange for providing the young lads with money for drink! It's told through the eyes of pissed off young women.

- elephantwoman
21h ago

I was jumping for joy when I found out it was a leap year ..

- ThePeoplesPoet
21h ago

I will not be leaving the house today because I know I will be bombarded with proposals from bookish women.

• LouSmorelsThePeoplesPoet

21h ago

If you're lucky you'll end up with a Guardian columnist, and there will be no more going down to the pub after dinner for you!

• BewilderedMarkThePeoplesPoet

18h ago

I will not be leaving the house today because I know I will be bombarded with proposals from bookish women.

Not if they've read your stuff.

• ThePeoplesPoet BewilderedMark

17h ago

I haven't published any books although there are a few YouTube videos of me doing robotics dancing to Rockit by Hernia Hancock.

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Someone discovered a locked box from WWII and its contents are incredible

shortlist.com

Retrieved Feb 26th 2016 at 7.48pm pst USA



8

26 Feb 2016

As a child there's a pretty good chance that you spent a fairly large proportion of your time imagining what it would be like to find buried treasure or a secret Aladdin's cave full of skulls, crossbones and other pirate stuff.

But as we grow older and our dreams never really materialise we slowly forget

about this fascination, or at least we did until last year when someone found that Nazi ghost train full of gold and we got excited about the prospect of discovery again. Mostly though we gave up on the hope, which is why it's always nice to discover stories like this one involving a locked box full of strange WWII relics.

Supposedly discovered in the Nevsky Pyatachok area of Russia, images show the box being dug up and opened to reveal clothing, alcohol, cash and other military paraphanelia - seemingly from a German soldier serving on the Eastern front. The internet reaction to this has obviously been a mixture of sheer amazement and sad cynicism that it's a fake. We're deciding to believe that it's real because life is much more interesting that way.



1.

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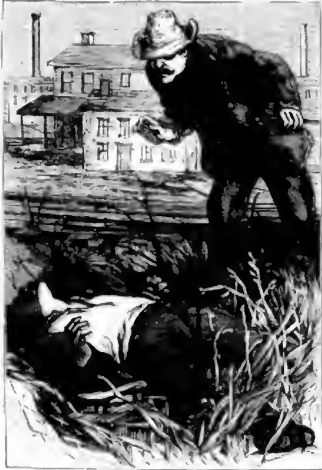
8.

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Saturday, January 23, 2016

A New Jersey Mystery.

Little Murders



The body of Francisco Avidoio was found lying among the cat-tails in the meadows outside East Newark, New Jersey, on September 8, 1889. His throat had been cut to the bone, and he had been shot three times by a .32 caliber revolver, twice through the heart and once through the upper chest. Avidoio, between 55 and 60 years of age, was a bootblack in Newark, his shoeshine kit lay near the body. He was an Italian immigrant who had been living in New York City but fled two months earlier after stabbing his son-in-law for paying too much attention to Avidoio's young wife.

Avidoio had not been killed where the body was found. There was no sign of a struggle, and no trace of blood on the ground, though the neck wound would have bled profusely. The pistol had been fired at such close range that the shots left powder marks on the body. However, the shirt was not marked. Holes on the shirt corresponded to the bullet wounds, but they appeared to have been punched out of the cloth, and the shirt had no blood stains. Apparently, the shirt had been changed after death.

A money pocket stitched on the inside of the shirt had been torn open implying that robbery had been the motive, but it was hard to imagine such a violent killing over a bootblack's earnings. The motive and circumstances of the murder remained a mystery, but the *Boston Herald* had suspicions: "...it might have been a murder ordered by one of the murderous Italian societies, the Mafia, for instance."

Sources:

"Another New Jersey Mystery." *National Police Gazette* 28 Sep 1889.

"Found Murdered." *Jersey Journal* 9 Sep 1889.

"Mysterious Murder." *Boston Herald* 9 Sep 1889.

Posted by Robert Wilhelm

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A New Skeleton and an Old Debate About Syphilis

Karl Taro Greenfeld

theatlantic.com

The recent discovery of ancient remains with signs of the disease shows how mysterious its origins are.



- Cari Romm
- Feb 18, 2016

In June 1495, the Italian historian Niccolo Squillaci wrote a letter describing a horrific disease that was sweeping through Europe.

“There are itching sensations, and an unpleasant pain in the joints; there is a rapidly increasing fever,” he wrote. “The skin is inflamed with revolting scabs and is completely covered with

swellings and tubercles, which are initially of a livid red color, and then become blacker.” And, tellingly, “It most often begins with the private parts.”

“I exhort you to provide some new remedy to remove this plague from the Italian people,” he concluded. “Nothing could be more serious than this curse, this barbarian poison.”

More than half a millennium later, there are some things we know about that “barbarian poison.” We know that it was syphilis, and that Squillaci’s letter was one of the first documents describing the first recorded epidemic of the disease. We know that it’s caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium called *Treponema pallidum*, and that it spreads through sexual contact. And we know that a cure wouldn’t be discovered until penicillin was found to be an effective treatment in 1943.

What we still don’t know, though, is where syphilis came from.

There are two main theories about the origins of the 1495 outbreak. The first, known as the Columbian hypothesis, holds that Christopher Columbus and his crew carried the disease from the New World back across the Atlantic. Records from the outbreak indicate that the disease hadn’t been seen before in Europe, Columbian proponents argue, meaning that timing-wise, a cross-continental import was the likeliest explanation.

“Most physicians felt that this was a new disease, that it hadn’t been seen before in Europe, and that view tended to prevail for quite some time,” said John Parascandola, a medical historian and the author of *Sex, Science, and Sin: A History of Syphilis in America*. “There were certain tempting reasons for people to accept that—blame it on the others, blame it on the outsiders. Before that, the French were blaming it on the Italians, the Italians were blaming it on the French, et cetera.” (As my colleague Naomi Sharp has noted, syphilis has

consistently been attributed to foreigners across the globe; it's also gone by "the Turkish disease," "the Polish disease," and "the Portuguese disease.")

But in the 20th century, a second theory emerged: the pre-Columbian hypothesis, which holds that the disease already had a long history in Europe, and that the epidemic *seemed* like a new disease only because it had previously been mistaken for something else.

Proponents of the pre-Columbian hypothesis have argued that this could have been a particularly virulent strain that made it seem unfamiliar, or that medical information became more readily available with the invention of the printing press in the mid-15th century, making it less likely that syphilis would be confused with some other disease, like venereal leprosy.

"The French were blaming it on the Italians, the Italians were blaming it on the French, et cetera."

Recently, a paper published online in the *International Journal of Paleopathology*, subtitled "Implications for the origins of syphilis," claims to help clarify the issue. More than anything, though, it serves as a case study for just how murky the origins of syphilis remain, and how far scientists are from reaching a consensus.

The paper describes the case of an adult male skeleton found in the Chiu Chiu cemetery, a gravesite in northern Chile dating to roughly 210 B.C. The sternum and two of the vertebrae showed evidence of a thoracic aortic aneurysm, a heart condition that can be caused by late-stage syphilis.

"We reinforce a theory that's been suggested for some time, that venereal syphilis was present in pre-Columbian times in the Americas," said Mario Castro, a professor of morphology at the University of Desarrollo in Santiago, Chile, and the paper's lead author. "Our main objective was to describe this very clear-cut case of an aortic aneurysm," but taken in conjunction with another case of a similar skeleton from the same time period, found in Saskatchewan, Canada, in the 1980s, "it makes sense to say we had syphilis at the time."

Related Stories



- During World War II, Sex Was a National-Security Threat
- The Return of Syphilis

But the connection is a tenuous one, said Molly Zuckerman, an assistant professor of biological anthropology at Mississippi State University. Syphilis is

part of a category of diseases known as treponemal disease, a group that also includes yaws, a skin infection found in tropical parts of South America, Asia, and Africa; the Chiu Chiu skeleton, she says, could very well have been suffering from yaws instead.

"We've known that yaws and bejel [another treponemal disease] were all over the Americas

before Columbus arrived,” she said. “They are ubiquitous in some skeletal samples, just all over the place.”

What’s more, the type of aneurysm the skeleton likely suffered, can also be caused by atherosclerosis. An atherosclerosis-induced aneurysm, Castro said, more often affects a different part of the artery, but Zuckerman argued that the distinction wasn’t enough to support a case for syphilis over yaws, atherosclerosis, or some other cause.

“Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence,” she said.

In 2008, a team from Emory University published a genetic analysis of treponemal bacteria. The bacterial strain that causes venereal syphilis, they found, is relatively new in human history, and most closely related to strains that caused yaws in South America. Based on their analysis, they offered a new theory for syphilis’s global spread.

“It is not clear whether venereal syphilis existed in the New World prior to Columbus’s arrival,” they wrote. “While it is possible that Columbus and his crew imported venereal syphilis from the New World to Europe, it is also possible that the explorers imported a non-venereal progenitor that rapidly evolved into the pathogen we know today only after it was introduced into the Old World.”

According to Zuckerman, the third theory is known as the “modified Columbian hypothesis,” so called because it tweaked the original hypothesis to account for new genetic evidence. Zuckerman and her colleagues made the case for this middle ground in a 2012 paper in *Evolutionary Anthropology*: “Columbus and his crew could have transported a New World, non-venereal treponemal infection to Europe upon their return,” they wrote, “which, once there, could have responded to dramatically different selection pressures with a new, sexual, transmission strategy.”

More recently, Zuckerman was also part of a team that published a 2011 paper in the *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology* reviewing 54 different reports of treponemal disease in pre-Columbian Europe. None of the cases, they argued, presented evidence strong enough—either in the dating of the bodies or the signs of syphilis they displayed—to validate the pre-Columbian hypothesis.

“Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.”

“Many of the reports use nonspecific indicators to diagnose treponemal disease do not provide adequate information about the methods used to date specimens, and do not include high-quality photographs of the lesions of interest,” the authors wrote. “Thus, despite an increasing number of published reports of pre-Columbian treponemal infection, it appears that solid evidence supporting an Old World origin for the disease remains absent.”

More broadly, though, the problem isn’t a lack of evidence; it’s an abundance of evidence on all sides. Just a few months ago, for example, researchers discovered 14th-century skeletons in Austria that they say show signs of congenital syphilis, which is transmitted from mother to child rather than sexually. Taken one way, this could refute the Columbian hypothesis, as the

scientists who found the skeletons argue; taken another way, it could reinforce the modified theory.

The only thing the Austrian discovery seems to guarantee, in other words, is that these skeletons, like the one in Chiu Chiu and the one in Saskatchewan and so many others, will add another wrinkle to a debate that doesn't seem likely to be resolved any time soon.

"I hate to say never, especially with increasing improvements in science, genetics, and the types of pathological studies done on bones, Parascandola said. "And someone could still find the perfect specimen" to definitively pinpoint the origins of syphilis. "On the other hand, I don't feel confident that this will really happen at some point in the future."

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Adolf Hitler Had A Micro-Penis And An Undescended Testicle, Used Bull Semen To Boost Libido

inquisitr.com



Hitler Had Small Penis, Displaced Urethra

February 22, 2016

Adolf Hitler Had A Micro-Penis And An Undescended Testicle, Used Bull Semen To Boost Libido

Adolf Hitler had a micro-penis and possibly had to sit down to urinate, it has recently been revealed. Naturally, now there's speculation that the leader of the Nazi party was trying to overcompensate for his manhood's miniature size when he terrorized Europe and slaughtered millions of Jewish

people during the Holocaust. Perhaps, Hitler's micro-penis also played a part in his hypocritical goal to establish an Aryan empire inhabited by "perfect" physical specimens unlike himself.

According to the *Telegraph*, historians Jonathan Mayo and Emma Craigie have discovered that Adolf Hitler suffered from a condition called hypospadias. This is a birth defect that has a drastic effect on the way the penis looks and functions—the urethra is located somewhere on the underside of the penis instead of on its tip. Hypospadias can make urinating difficult, and those who suffer from the condition often have to sit down to do so to avoid spraying urine all over the place. Some men might consider this a bit emasculating.



Hitler practices posing. [Photo by Heinrich Hoffmann/Getty Images]

It their book, *Hitler's Last Day: Minute by Minute*, Mayo and Craigie reveal that Hitler had a micro-penis because of his hypospadias, and this was not the only genital-related deformity that the dictator was cursed with; he also had one undescended testicle, a condition known as cryptorchism.

A bizarre fascination with Hitler's genitals, and how he used them, has existed for decades. According to *Slate*, there's an old urban legend that he lost a testicle while trying to urinate in a goat's mouth. An anti-Hitler rhyme that was popular with schoolchildren in the late '30s also described Hitler as only having one testicle, but it jests that his testicle was removed by his mother when he was a child.

"Hitler has only got one b*** / The other is in the Albert Hall / His mother, the dirty b***** / Cut it off when he was small."

While rumors about Adolf Hitler's cryptorchism have existed since World War II, talk about his hypospadias and his micro-penis is a more recent thing. According to Patient.info, hypospadias can make sexual intercourse difficult or even impossible, and some reports suggest that Hitler did have a hard time maintaining an erection. As *Gawker* reports, Hitler's medical records reveal that he used bull semen injections to jump-start his libido before attempting to get it on with mistress Eva Braun. However, Hitler was obsessed with hygiene, and some reports claim that he never touched Eva during intercourse.

"I imagine Eva would stand a good distance away and lift her skirt and then there would be some sort of

soggy climax on Hitler's part and that would be that," novelist Martin Amis said while speaking at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature, as reports the *Daily Mail*.

Perhaps having a micro-penis also played a part in Adolf Hitler's decision to keep his distance from Eva Braun while doing the deed.



Adolf Hitler with mistress Eva Braun (1910 – 1945). [Photo by Keystone/Getty Images]

Amis, author of *Zone of Interest*, describes Hitler as "asexual," but this might not be quite accurate. Hitler's physician, Dr. Theodore Morrell, did believe that he was sexually active, but those bull semen injections didn't turn the Fuhrer into a sex-crazed animal.

"Morrell believes that Hitler, although not strongly inclined to sexual activity, did have sexual intercourse with Eva Braun, though they were accustomed to sleep in separate beds."

Many of Adolf Hitler's lovers didn't live long enough to talk about his micro-penis or the rumors that he only had one testicle; two of his six supposed female lovers committed suicide, and two others

attempted suicide. One of these women died a few years later.

Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun took their own lives on April 30, 1945. As *Mental Floss* reports, their bodies were burned by Nazi soldiers shortly after the deed was done. Had they not been set aflame, it's likely that the world would have been mocking the Fuhrer's micro-penis long before now.

Author

Treva Bowdoin

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The INCREDIBLE picture that 'proves' Adolf Hitler lived to 95 with his Brazilian lover

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The INCREDIBLE picture that
'proves' Adolf Hitler lived to
95 with his Brazilian lover

THIS is the picture that proves Adolf Hitler did not die in his bunker and escaped to Brazil where he lived to the ripe old age of 95, a Nazi-hunting author claims.

By Gareth Morgan

PUBLISHED: 10:43, Sun, Jan 24, 2016 | UPDATED: 12:32, Sun, Jan 24, 2016



Globo•GETTY

The evil dictator fled to Paraguay, via Argentina, before settling in a small town in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil, according to a shocking book.

Hitler is said to have used the assumed name of Adolf Leipzig and was known to the 12,000 locals in Nossa Senhora do Livramento as "the Old German".

The man at the centre of the controversial claim is pictured,

two years before his death in 1984, posing happily with his black girlfriend Cutinga.

Simoni Renee Guerreiro Dias, who wrote *Hitler in Brazil - His Life and His Death*, claims he was in the area hunting for buried treasure using a map given to him by friends withing the Vatican.

She insists that Hitler was using his lover Cutinga to hide his true identity as a vile Aryan supremacist.

Simoni, a Brazilian jew, refuses to accept that the Fuhrer shot himself in his Berlin bunker on April 30 1945. She is demanding that Leipzig's remains be exhumed and his DNA tested tested against living relatives of Hitler.

She told local journalists: "I just laughed at first, I thought it was a joke. Today I'm convinced it is true and Adolf Hitler didn't end up here by chance."

Simoni spent two years in the small town near the Bolivian border, which was founded during an 18th century gold rush, investigating her oddball theory.

She has linked the Fuhrer's alleged arrival in the area to a Vatican offer of ownership rights over buried Jesuit treasure in a cave near his adopted home.

And she claims that he chose the surname of Leipzig because it was the birthplace of Hitler's favourite composer, Bach.



Her suspicions about Adolf Leipzig increased after she Photoshopped a moustache onto the grainy picture she obtained of him and compared it to photos of the Nazi leader.

According to Simoni, an unidentified Polish nun recognised an elderly man due to have an op at a hospital in Cuiaba in the early eighties as Hitler and demanded he leave - but was reprimanded by a superior who claimed he was there

on Vatican orders.

Conspiracy theorists have long argued Hitler escaped from Germany and fled to south America, following fellow Nazis Adolf Eichmann and Josef Mengele.

This theory became the centre of a fresh row last year when two British authors were accused of plagiarism by a journalist in Argentina.

Gerrard Williams and Simon Dunstan claimed in a 2011 book *Grey Wolf: The Escape of Adolf Hitler*, that the Fuhrer fled with his mistress Eva Braun to Patagonia and had two daughters before dying in 1962 aged 73.

The book was later made into a documentary film. Argentine journalist accused the British pair of using his research to substantiate claims made in the book, a charge Williams and Dunstan denied.

The claims about Hitler's life in Argentina were ridiculed by historian Guy Walters, who described them as "2,000 per cent rubbish" when the book came out.

He added: "It's an absolute disgrace. There's no substance to it at all. It appeals to the deluded fantasies of conspiracy theorists and has no place whatsoever in historical research."

Academics in Brazil have also rubbished the theory Hitler lived and died in Nossa Senhora do Livramento.

Candido Moreira Rodrigues, a history professor at Mato Grosso's Federal University said: "There's nothing new in people who claim to be historians coming up with the most far-reaching theories about Hitler supposedly living in south America and subsequently dying in

one of the countries in this region."

Tens of thousands of Nazis escaped after the war, including the notorious Adolf Eichmann and Josef Mengele.

Investigators probing Hitler's demise were hampered by the lack of any physical evidence for his death.



Fantasists were given added ammunition he didn't die in his Berlin bunker when 2009 DNA tests on skull fragments found near the bunker and believed to be his, turned out to belong to a woman.

Rochus Misch, a former bodyguard of Adolf Hitler who has been named as the last man to see the Fuhrer alive during his final hours in Germany, died last September aged 96.

Misch, who lived with Hitler and his mistress in their underground refuge as the allies closed in, told before his death he saw Hitler slumped with his head on the table after hearing a gunshot behind his closed door.

GETTY

390 Comments

5 days ago

AlliPepp

Did anyone other than me notice that the ears aren't the same shape?

7 days ago

DavidTemple

What a load of Lobbucks !!!

8 days ago

murrs1

Yeh right Hitler with a BLACK girlfriend !? Dont think so some how !

18 days ago

Harry Prager

Hitler was already suffering from Parkinsons disease and there is not a chance in hell he lived to 96. He may have made it 55, but not much more as his health was declining rapidly. What we do know is that there are reliable witnesses who saw Hitler and four of his Aides depart the Berghoff airport to Spain. There is proof positive he got to Spain via the underground tunnel that lead from his bunker to the Berghoff airport.

17 days ago

Proper Ganda

Hitler did not have Parkinson's. His left arm had a tremor from a long-standing shoulder injury, which got worse, and more painful as he got older. His state of health was poor because he was over-medicated by his personal doctor, and his extreme vegan diet didn't help either. Potato puffs, millet seeds, and an obsession for chocolate cake from what I can gather. Adolph must have had an extreme wind problem down in that there bunker, if you get my drift. Then we have to take into account his extreme mental stress that came from seeing

his empire collapsing all around him.

18 days ago

Thaddeuslovelock

Even if Hitler has survived the Bunker there was no way at all, he would have lived to be 95. His health was already crumbling.

18 days ago

Thaddeuslovelock

I bet he was hanging around with Elvis Presley. Who also didn't die.

19 days ago

Proper Ganda

Stalin never believed that Hitler shot himself in the bunker. There is rather too much circumstantial evidence out there pointing to Hitler and Eva Braun having lived out the rest of their lives in Argentina, to be dismissed as just a daft fantasy. I've read quite a bit on the subject over the years. Hitler escaped to Argentina I now believe. How he got there is open to speculation. I suspect that if Monty had had his way and spearheaded his advance to Berlin, and liberated that city before the Red Army had got there I reckon Hitler, and some of his staff would have thrown themselves on the mercy of 'The English' like Napoleon had done over a century earlier. These people were living in a dream world of unreality that we could ever understand today with the benefit of hind sight. If General Patton had beaten Monty to Berlin, Hitler might have done the just same except for they contempt the Nazis had for Roosevelt and his dew ish cronies. Imagine what the Russians would have done with great beast himself if they had captured him alive? So for Hitler it was a stark choice between either an ignominious death in a cave, or a new life somewhere out of reach of the allies. The Fuhrer chose Argentina.

18 days ago

Harry Prager

What has been proved beyond all reasonable doubt he fled to Spain. The big problem is how on earth did he get to Argentina. I doubt that he went by submarine, so how

17 days ago

Proper Ganda

Intriguing problem. I've read a couple of recent books on the subject, and they both tell different tales. I even had a psychic tell me once that he escaped Berlin to a base in Antarctica by plane and submarine. However, once ensconced there he missed the mountains, and wanted to breath some Alpine air once again. Argentina seemed preferable to see out the rest of his days. I think that photo of Hitler with his 'girlfriend' is a fake.

12 days ago

JackDean

Think about it hitler hated the jews and most other races so why would he befriend a dark complected woman as his girl friend its clearly not hitler

21 days ago

A.J Hallowell

And why is it that when monsters of ww2 are spoken of nobody talks about how German refugees where pinned up and denied shelter? And how Germans where shot like rabid animals? Or oh how about how Japanese Americans where put into force labor camps. Or is this lost to history?

19 days ago

Proper Ganda

Well said.

21 days ago

A.J Hallowell

Empire beneath the ice how the Nazis won ww2 ? has anyone ever read this book lol

11 days ago

penguin1

No, didn't know it existed. Can you give us an overview of the contents of the book ? PLZ !!!

24 days ago

kobokat.

Ah yes, a picture where you can't see a single feature of his face. Proof positive!

24 days ago

Equalizer

Apart from the little part where the guys ers are miles bigger

24 days ago

Professor Chaos

I don't believe a word of this. After the July Bomb Plot by Claus von Stauffenberg, Hitler, although he survived was on a slow-burning fuse to destruction. There is photographic evidence to show that he was suffering from Parkinson's Disease. He was heavily dependent upon opiate-based medicines for a variety of ailments.

18 days ago

Harry Prager

Indeed he was suffering from Parkinsons disease as it can clearly be seen in the old black and white movies and documentaries aired on Tv where he is seen with the Hitler Youth patting each child with his left hand behind his back. No way in hell could he have lived to 96 as some people would have us believe. Yet the Russians have the ashes and body parts taken to Russia and the Ruskies are not willing to say who the body was. Was it someone who may have looked like Hitler ??? That we will never know until the Russians reveal who the ashes and remains really belong to.

14 days ago

El chavo

If the russians had had proof positive identifiable remains that were removed from the bunker then Stalin would have been grandstanding with them and made overt pompous displays to that fact. What i also find disconcerting are repeated testimonials at Potsdam by Stalin that he did not believe Hitler to be dead but probably living in Argentina or elsewhere in south america.

33 days ago

Nicebloke

What a load of old tosh. Come on Express, get some real editorial

33 days ago

Spartan Man 5

There's definitely something wrong with the useless and lazy Daily Express editors who keep revamping this ridiculous article.

34 days ago

basilbrush

Bull SH-T, Utter Cods Wallop!

36 days ago

proudscot

Anyone who saw pictures of this monster taken outside his bunker in his final days with those wee boys lined could see he was dead man walking. To go from that to a beach boy is plain ridiculous.

36 days ago

lincsace

Incredible picture!!! it could be Barry Manilow.

36 days ago

JohnDoe5

How many times will you run this story?

36 days ago

IvorBalco

There have been many dictators, stop banging on about this one.

36 days ago

proudscot

What a creep.

36 days ago

Cheeky Pants

Yet another Jew making a profit from Hitler. They've done so well out of him that I suspect that families like the Rothchilds and Rockefellas secretly worship him.

37 days ago

Jef

do you mean the picture with no face

(edited)37 days ago

Mervyn

Hitler with a black woman? Never in a thousand years! He was the original engineer of apartheid.

37 days ago

Anthony Justice

Why does the media keep pushing this crap? This is an old story 2 years ago at least and why the fascination about some madman? The Nazis are long since dead and buried and they're not coming back. Today's neo nazis are just brain dead bottom pond feeders from the underclasses of society, no one takes them seriously.

37 days ago

55tan

You need to catch up Anthony,, we have many Nazis in very high profile positions worldwide today.. it is estimated that the USA president himself organised the escape from Germany of at least 20,000 Nazis possibly as many as 30,000. The whole American and wider nuclear and AI industries are relics of Nazi scientists. The experiments on humans never stopped even today, they just moved locations.

37 days ago

pollypleck

they are not dead there is still a Nazi movement in Germany.

18 days ago

Harry Prager

There are many descendants from the Nazis who are alive and well Herman Goering,s daughter , Edde is alive and well living in Berlin as are Hitlers two nephews who live in the USA. They have never married as they want the Hitler name to die out.

18 days ago

Harry Prager

Forgot to mention that Edde will be 77 this year.

37 days ago

SueBaker

They ears don't look the same to me so I don't think it is hitler

37 days ago

RobertRE

Well that photofit would soon get old Adolf arrested anywhere.....NOT!

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An aggressive sea lion stole his halibut. Then the startled fisherman impaled his foot.

adn.com

Alaska Dispatch News

Alaska Dispatch News

An aggressive sea lion stole his halibut. Then the startled fisherman impaled his foot.

Alaska Dispatch News

March 3, 2016

Wildlife troopers in Sitka say a fisherman's foot was impaled after an aggressive sea lion snatched most of a large halibut away from him.

On Thursday, Sitka-based troopers got a report about a sea lion at the cleaning dock at Sealing Cove Harbor, according to an online dispatch.

"The complainant reported that while he was cleaning a 70-pound halibut on the dock an aggressive sea lion came onto the dock, advanced towards him and took the majority of the fish," the dispatch says.

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Alexander Peden's mask

nms.ac.uk



Behind
this

Above: Alexander Peden's mask. Above: The National Covenant can be seen in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Alexander Peden's mask, on display in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery at National Museum of Scotland.

frightening-looking mask, worn as a disguise by the outlawed Covenanting minister Alexander Peden, lies a fascinating story of rebellion and religious conviction.

Alexander Peden mask fact file

Date: 1660-1670

Made by: Alexander Peden (1626-1686)

Made from: The mask is made from leather and fabric. The beard and wig are probably made from real human hair. There are also some feathers and false teeth attached.

Dimensions: Length 235 mm, width 260 mm

Museum reference: H.NT 239

On display: Kingdom of the Scots, Level 1, National Museum of Scotland

Did you know? The mask was discovered in the 1840s, in a cottage near Cumnock. The mask and wig, along with his sword, had been handed down through his family for generations.



Who were the Covenanters?

'Covenanter' was the name given to the people of Scotland who signed the National Covenant in 1638, in opposition to religious and political policies introduced by Charles I. You can see this historic document in the National Museum of Scotland, just a few yards away from Greyfriar's Kirk, where it was first signed on 28 February 1638.

The Covenant was a pledge or contract between the Scottish people and God to uphold Presbyterian values. This included the refusal to accept the King as the spiritual head of the church in Scotland: the Covenanters believed that Jesus Christ was the

Above: Alexander Peden's mask.
 Above: The National Covenant can be seen in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Alexander Peden's mask, on display in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery at National Museum of Scotland.



Above: Alexander Peden's mask.
 Above: The National Covenant can be seen in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Alexander Peden's mask, on display in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery at National Museum of Scotland.

head of the church. The Covenant also rejected the hierarchical nature of the Episcopalian system of church government, which was ruled by bishops. Presbyterians believed that the church should be governed by presbyteries, a church court run by church elders selected from each congregation in a geographical area. Most importantly Presbyterians believed that ministers should be chosen by their congregations.

For Charles I, this attitude was treasonous, and he declared war on the Covenanters. This war would bring about his downfall: in need of funds to pursue the war,

Charles was forced to recall Parliament after almost 10 years of ruling alone. The subsequent deadlock between King and Parliament resulted in civil war across England, Scotland and Ireland.

The Killing Time



Above: Alexander Peden's mask. Above: The National Covenant can be seen in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Alexander Peden's mask, on display in the Kingdom of the Scots gallery at National Museum of Scotland.

In 1660, Charles II was restored to the throne. In return for assistance from the Covenanters, he had reluctantly signed the Covenant. Yet in 1662 the new King renounced his promise and declared himself the head of the Scottish Church.

A period of persecution followed, in which some 350 ministers with Covenanting sympathies were forced from their churches. Rather than suffer the imposition of the hierarchy of the Episcopalian system, they became outlaws, continuing to fight their cause.

Many began preaching illegally at open air services known as 'coventicles' – a practice that became punishable by death under Charles's new laws. Covenanters were hunted down by government troops, imprisoned, executed or transported to the colonies. All Scots were forced to take an oath renouncing the Covenant. Anyone who refused to do so could be shot. Many chose to die rather than renounce their beliefs. This bloody period became known as 'the

Killing Times'.

Who was Alexander Peden?

This mask was worn as disguise by one of the Covenanters' most charismatic preachers, Alexander Peden (1626-1686). 'Prophet Peden', a minister from Ayrshire, was an outlaw who preached illegally against the changes imposed by Charles II and encouraged his followers to defy them. Most of his preaching was done in the south and west of Scotland. When not preaching he would travel between sites, sleeping in caves and shelters to avoid recognition and capture.

After 11 years on the run, he was captured and imprisoned for four years on the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth – the Scottish Alcatraz. Yet plans to exile him to a plantation in Virginia in America backfired when he jumped ship and escaped to Ireland. He then returned to Scotland, where he continued to preach throughout the Killing Times. His final days before his death at the age of sixty were spent living in a cave, yet he died a free man. He was buried in Auchinleck churchyard, in East Ayrshire.

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Alien hunter claims he has proof UFOs visited Earth throughout history

12:38, 4 Mar 2016 Updated 12:38, 4 Mar 2016 By Jon Dean

mirror.co.uk

Is this proof UFOs visited Earth throughout history? Alien hunter spots mysterious carving on ancient coin



A 17th century French token has UFO hunters claiming 'absolute proof' of UFO sightings hundreds of years ago

Proof: This 17th century French token shows a UFO, an investigator claims

An ancient coin minted hundreds of years ago proves aliens made multiple visits to Earth, a UFO hunter claims.

Decoration on this French artifact, carved between 1680 and 1856, shows a strange, circular, craft-like object floating in the sky.

The coin is not actually currency but a jeton - used for counting or playing games.

And alien enthusiast Scott C Waring says the mysterious object on it is proof of regular extra terrestrial trips to our planet.

On his website he wrote: "I've been looking for one of these off and on for a few weeks.

Evidence: Investigators are convinced the carving shows a UFO

"It looks really amazing and is absolute proof that in the 1600s the French witnessed enough UFO sightings to decide to put some of what they saw on coins."

He added: "It is about the size of a US quarter-dollar and similar to thousands of other jetons with different religious and educational designs that were produced and used in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries.

"It appears to commemorate a UFO sighting of a wheel like object."

The coins can be found on Ebay for anything between £14 and £350 depending on their condition.

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All About Leap Day - History in the Headlines

By History.com Staff
February 29, 2012

history.com



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A+E Networks

It's February 29—Happy Leap Day! Find out more about the intriguing history of leap year, as well as some fun facts and famous people with leap day birthdays.

History of Leap Year

The Roman dictator Julius Caesar is considered the “father” of leap year. The ancient Roman calendar system was based on a total of 355 days in a year—a full 10 ¼ days shorter than a solar year, which is the length of time it takes the Earth to make one complete orbit around the sun. To keep the calendar system in line with the seasons, Roman officials were supposed to insert an extra month every so often, but by the time Caesar began to rule Rome, the calendar had gotten seriously out of whack. Caesar consulted with the top astronomers of the day, and in 46 B.C. decided to add one day (known as an intercalary day, or leap day) every four years to make up the discrepancy between the lunar and solar calendars. Caesar also took the opportunity to rename Quintillis, the fifth month of the year (counting from March), leaving us with the month we call July today.

The leap year tradition took effect in 45 B.C., after a transition year that contained three extra months to make up for the difference that had accumulated over the centuries. The Julian calendar didn't number days from “1” on up, but instead used calends (first day of the month),

ides (middle of the month) and nons (in between). The leap day was set on the day before the 6th of calends of March, so leap day originally came six days before the first day of March, or February 25 (as February normally had 29 days).

That might have solved the problem, except that a solar year is actually 11 minutes short of 365¼ days: It's actually closer to 365.2425 days long (365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds). Astronomers figured this out around the second century A.D., but the calendar system didn't change, and by the 16th century it was nearly 10 days off-track, even with the leap year system. In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII made his own reforms to the Julian Calendar, restoring the vernal equinox to March 21 from March 11, and producing the calendar system most of us use today.

Leap Year Trivia

- Did you know that according to the Gregorian calendar, leap year doesn't occur exactly every four years? That's right—Gregory was even more precise than that, and made leap year occur in years divisible by four, except for those divisible by 100 and not divisible by 400. Confusing enough for you? In effect, that means that 97 out of every 400 years are leap years, including the century years 1600 and 2000 but NOT 1700, 1800 and 1900.
- According to British tradition, a leap day is the only day of the year a woman can propose marriage to a man. As legend has it, in fifth century Ireland, St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick about the fact that women had to wait for men to propose. So Patrick allowed women one day every four years to take the initiative. The tradition became the basis for Sadie Hawkins Day in the United States, first dreamed up by Al Capp in his cartoon serial "L'il Abner" and celebrated either on February 29 or November 15, the day the first L'il Abner comic appeared.
- Because Greek superstition holds that marrying in a leap year brings bad luck, as many as one of every five Greek couples avoid planning their weddings in a leap year.
- The first warrants for arrests in the Salem witchcraft trials were issued on February 29, 1692.

Famous "Leaplings"

Many people born on leap day—known as "leaplings" or "leapers"—don't usually wait four years to celebrate their birthdays, but choose to celebrate on February 28 or March 1 instead. Some 4.1 million people worldwide have been born on a February 29, and the chances of having a leap birthday are one in 1,461. In a fascinating family coincidence (according to the Guinness Book of World Records), Norway's three Henriksen siblings were born on three consecutive leap days: Heidi in 1960, Olav in 1964 and Leif-Martin in 1968.

Some famous "Leaplings" throughout history include:

- Ann Lee, founder of the Shaker movement (born 1736)
- Gioacchino Rossini, composer (born 1792)
- Jimmy Dorsey, jazz clarinetist, saxophonist, trumpeter and big band leader (born 1904)
- Dinah Shore, singer and actress (born 1916)

- Billy Turner, trainer of Seattle Slew, winner of the 1977 Triple Crown (born 1940)
- Dennis Farina, actor (born 1944)
- Tony Robbins, self-help guru and motivational speaker (born 1960)
- Antonio Sabato Jr., actor (born 1972)
- Ja Rule, rapper/actor (born 1976)

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Why do we have leap year?



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Amputated legs at waste management facility are from two different people

news.yahoo.com



Amputated legs at waste management facility are from two different people

Ashlea Brown and Krystal Johnson

February 19, 2016, 5:24 am

Amputated legs at waste management facility are from two different people - Yahoo7



There is a grisly new twist in the discovery of two amputated human legs that were found on Tuesday at a Newcastle rubbish tip.

A forensic pathologist said the left and right legs have come from two different people, *Newcastle Herald* reports.

It hasn't been determined if they are of the same gender.



Two legs were found at a tip in Newcastle on Tuesday. Photo: 7News

A random inspection at an area of the tip at Summerhill Waste Management Centre uncovered the disturbing find which has come the centre of a murder investigation.

The gruesome find was discovered by a shocked council inspector who apparently found the two legs sticking out of a pile of garbage.

7 News revealed on Wednesday the body parts had been surgically removed by a professional and dumped with garbage instead of being disposed of properly.

The parts were buried for up to six weeks, suggesting they they could have come from a cadaver.

Also found were vials of blood and bio-hazard bags, all of which should have been



An investigation is underway at Summerhill Waste Management Centre. Photo: 7News

incinerated.

The EPA said in a statement they will continue to work with public and private health services to establish where the legs had come from.

"We are looking into a number of possible scenarios at this stage of the investigation, including establishing the chain of disposal the body parts went through prior to ending up in

the landfill," the statement said.

The EPA also said the waste must be transported in a safe and secure container and not left unattended when it is being disposed of and this type of waste needs a special type of license to store and dispose of the clinical waste.

Lorraine Long from the Medical Error Action Group said she was shocked but not surprised.

"This is hospital management for you at its best," she told 7 News.

"No system, don't care. But the point of all of this is, no respect for the dead."



Business returned to normal on Wednesday, however an investigation is continuing into the gruesome find. Photo: 7News

The Wallsend tip was business as usual on Wednesday as NSW health authorities scrambled to find the contractor responsible.

With up to 700 tonnes dumped here daily, it will be difficult to get the bottom of the error and determine whether it was an innocent mistake or a blatant lack of respect.

Shadow Health Minister Walt

Secord told 7 News the situation was 'absolutely unacceptable'.

"There has to be an investigation by the state government... we must always remember these human remains belong to loved ones."

The investigation is expected to be lengthy, but DNA testing could be a way of identifying the



remains.

Authorities will look into security cameras located at the tip to find out who is responsible.

The body parts could have been hidden among piles of rubbish for up to 6 weeks.

Photo: 7News

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An "Odd Superstition of Life and Death"

wordpress.com

An "Odd Superstition of Life and Death"

POLICE PROBE REPORT GRAVE IS OPENED, BODY DECAPITATED

Winona, Minn., Jan. 8.—Police today withheld a decision as to whether they would open the grave of Miss Frances Bloch, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bloch, of this city, to ascertain if the body had been decapitated in a superstitious belief that such action would end a long series of deaths in the family following confession by Thomas Bloch admitting that he had opened the grave but denied he had molested the body. Bloch's statement came following the announced intention of the authorities last night that they would exhume the body as a result of a disclosure that the grave of the girl and one of her brothers had been tampered with during the last 10 days. Bloch is reported to have told the police that his object in opening the grave was to confirm certain

"signs." When he opened the grave, he said, with the assistance of a neighbor, he found the bodies decomposed, nothing remaining but the bare skeleton.

Bloch denied that his intention was to cut the head from the body of his daughter and place it at the feet in the coffin because of a superstition that the spirit of the daughter had been responsible for the death of five of her brothers since her own death slightly over five years ago, police said.

Frank, the last of the Bloch sons, died last Saturday. It was said to be in connection with the illness of Frank Bloch that a visit was made to the grave of Frances in an effort to appease her spirit and save Frank's life.

The Bismarck Tribune, January 06, 1922

Odd Superstition of Life and Death

WINONA, MINN.—The bodies of Miss Frances Bloch and her brother Joseph are likely to repose forever undisturbed in their coffins in hillside graves, side by side, in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery here, with public curiosity satisfied.



After inspecting the body, Chief of Police H. C. Kiehan announced that the story told by Thomas Bloch, sixty-nine, her father, a former member of the local police force, that he had not mutilated the bodies of his children, when he and a neighbor, Thomas Kobus, opened the graves was correct.

The action of the authorities was to determine the reliability of persistent rumors that Bloch had exhumed and decapitated the body of his daughter, in a superstitious belief that by so doing he could end a series of deaths which had taken away four of his sons.

Bloch said he was made almost frantic by the death of four sons since the death of his daughter five years ago, and by the illness of his fifth and only surviving son, Frank.

Driven to desperation, he said, he acted on the repeated suggestion of

friends, who told him that the spirit of the first to die in a family "calls" the spirits of the survivors and that only by beheading his daughter's body could he save Frank's life and eventually that of himself, his wife and four married daughters. He and Kobus, whom he hired for a few dollars, opened the grave of his daughter. Nothing remained of the girl's body, he declared, but the skeleton, and for this reason, he said, the grave was refilled without the body having been mutilated. They opened the grave of his son, Joseph, who died four years ago. Again, he declared only a skeleton was found. The next day Frank died.

The Herald (New Orleans), Feb. 16, 1922

Thomas Bloch was born in either Germany or Poland according to the 1910 census. It's not far-

Police Find Dead Not Decapitated on Opening Graves

Winona, Minn., Jan. 8.—Persistent rumors that the bodies of Miss Frances Bloch and her brother Joseph had been mutilated were set at rest Sunday by police, who examined the grave of the former in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery here. They found that her body had not been decapitated.

The action was taken to ascertain the reliability of the rumors which were to the effect that Thomas Bloch, 69, the father, and a neighbor, had exhumed and decapitated the body of his daughter in a superstitious belief that by so doing he could end a series of deaths which had taken four of his sons and threatened a fifth.

The grave of Joseph was not examined.

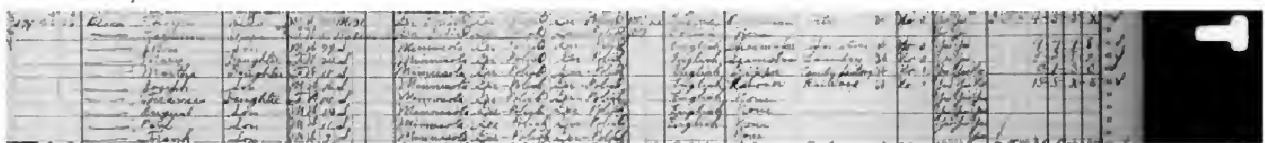
The Great Falls Tribune (January 09, 1922) reported that Joseph's grave was not opened.

fetches that he might've believed that his daughter was a vampire (or something similar) if he was familiar with that part of his native land's folklore.

December 17, 2015

Comments are closed.

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The Bismarck Tribune, January 06, 1922 The Herald (New Orleans), Feb. 16, 1922 The Great Falls Tribune (January 09, 1922) reported that Joseph's grave was not opened.

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The PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

The Anthropometric Detective and His Racial Clues

Ava Kofman explores how the spectre of race, in particular Francis Galton's disturbing theory of eugenics, haunts the early history of fingerprint technology.



Francis Galton appears in one of his own anthropometry cards, created by Alphonse Bertillon in 1893 — Source: University College London (CC-BY-NC-ND)

A complex pattern is capable of suggesting various readings, as the figuring on a wall-paper may suggest a variety of forms and faces to those who have such fancies. — Francis Galton, *Finger Prints*, 1892

By the time Arthur Conan Doyle published “The Adventure of the Norwood Builder” in *The Strand Magazine* in 1903, the reputation of the fingerprint as a powerful and “self-evident” forensic technology — one that could be used in a court of law to prove a suspect’s guilt — was on the rise. In 1902, a fingerprint was accepted in an English court as evidence for a burglar’s presence at the scene of the crime. By 1904, Scotland Yard was processing as many as three hundred fingerprint cards every week. Precisely because the fingerprint’s authoritative status was taken for

granted, Conan Doyle’s fictional detective Sherlock Holmes sought to undermine it. In “Norwood Builder”, Holmes discovers that the fingerprint in question does not belong to the suspect, but is, instead, a forged print used to frame him.

Although Holmes published on fingerprints in the anthropological journals of his fictional universe, the most prolific author of actual texts on fingerprinting found Holmes’ methods in Conan Doyle’s latest tale suspect. Not long after the story appeared, the gentleman scientist Francis Galton wrote to Conan Doyle asking how the wax mould of a seal could have left a legible bloody fingerprint on the wall, given that it is not “possible to get good impressions from a hard engraved material upon a hard uneven surface”. Taking the fiction’s depiction of forensic science in good faith, Galton asked Conan Doyle for further details of his experiments with fingerprints. It is unclear whether Conan Doyle responded and unlikely that he ever conducted experiments.

While this curious bit of correspondence ended before it really began, Galton’s own career in the emerging science of fingerprinting was often compared to the fictional detective’s, although his work had quite different implications for the potentials of fingerprinting technology. To anthropologists and evolutionary theorists like Galton, the fingerprint was

more than a criminal trace. At the heart of Galton's exhaustive research program into fingerprints was always the "great expectation" that they might serve as tiny fossil records, providing evidence of the genealogy, personality, criminality, and perhaps even destiny of individuals and groups.

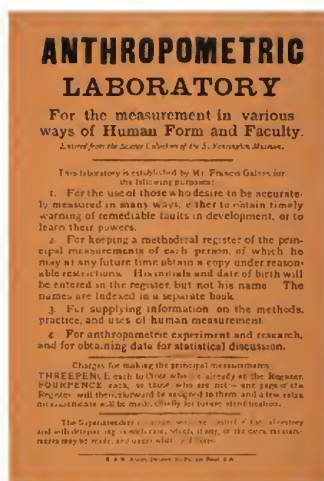


Galton's first Anthropometric Laboratory situated in a corner of the International Health Exhibition in Kensington, London, 1884–1885 — Source .

In 1888, a reporter from the *Pall Mall Gazette* paid a visit to Galton's Anthropometric Laboratory in London, where instruments developed by Galton measured the physical and mental characteristics — from keenness of hearing to breathing power — of over 10,000 people. The resulting article, titled "A Morning With the Anthropometric Detectives", described Galton's laboratory as a world of "order and precision, and tests of the nicest accuracy". "Dumb though they are," Galton told the reporter, "what splendid detectives our instruments might prove". "Splendid detectives!" the reporter exclaimed, "I am not, I hope, in a department of the Criminal Investigation

Department, unconsciously yielding convincing proofs of personal identity with some scoundrel hitherto unhung."

The comparison to detection in the article's title is no accident: the scientific development of medical and anthropometric instruments like Galton's coincided with the rise of the detective novel, a genre which, in the words of the literary scholar Ronald Thomas, was "preoccupied with the professional monitoring and identification of bodies". Fears of mistaken identity and unconscious slips were crystallized in the literature of detection but emerged from a broad range of hermeneutic practices across the era, at a time in which those in power considered the borders of empire and boundaries of racial identity to be insecure.



Advertisement for Galton's Anthropometric Laboratory when it was situated in South

These links between Galton's work with fingerprints and detective fiction continued in the reviews of his most important contribution on the subject, his 1892 monograph *Finger Prints*. Many noted its immediate parallels to other books of clues. "A capital title for a detective story, *Fingerprints*" wrote the *National Observer*. A writer for the *British Medical Journal*, likely not having encountered Conan Doyle's multiple stories on fingerprints, remarked that he would be "astonished if Mr Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, does not work something up by Mr Francis Galton's unique book on thumbmarks". *The Humanitarian* went as far as to suggest that the technology "opens up a new avenue for the Braddons and Gaboriaus, and other 'detective novelists,' to track and run to earth the most mysterious crimes. A field of investigation is here opened which will rival in fascination the celebrated 'Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.'" These reviewers were right. But perhaps, in retrospect, not

Kensington Museum — in the way they had intended.
Source: Wellcome Library (CC-BY 4.0).

In the late nineteenth century, knowledge based on the interpretation of “clues unnoticed by others” became increasingly influential across a wide spectrum of professions — from doctors to physiognomists, from connoisseurs to naturalists. In his classic text, “Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method”, the historian Carlo Ginzburg traces the rise of this semiotic model in the human sciences, as best exemplified by his titular trio of diagnostic sleuths, to the emergence of “an increasingly clear tendency for state power to impose a close-meshed net of control on society [...which] involved attributing identity through characteristics which were trivial and beyond conscious control.”

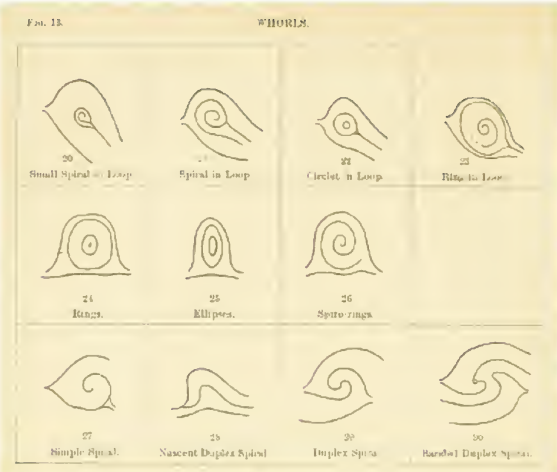


Table showing various “whorl” patterns to be found in the prints, featured in Galton’s *Finger Prints* (1892) — Source .

L R		L, R		Left					Right					Index
1 2 3	1 2 3	T 4, T 4		4	3	2	1	T	T	1	2	3	4	
353, 353	35, 35													38.2
353, 353	35, 35													19.2
353, 353	15, 35													6.2
353, 653	35, 35													17.1
353, 353	55, 35													16.1
353, 455	55, 35													49.1
365, 355	55, 55													3.2
415, 555	35, 35													21.2

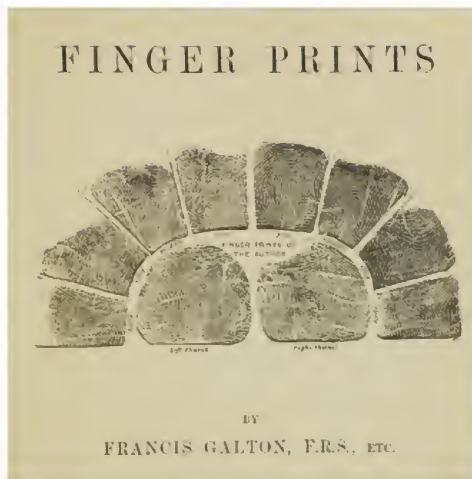
Table showing patterns for each digit of various hands, featured in Vol. III of *The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton* (1914) by Karl Pearson — Source .

It is unsurprising then that Galton, who described his own early training in forensic medicine as having “a sort of Sherlock Holmes fascination”, referred to the fingerprint as having a “very pronounced, symptomatic character.” The anthropometric detective, like his fictional ally Holmes, coupled his forensic expertise with his conjectural knowledge to read and interpret unruly documents and bodies. But unlike Holmes, Galton was guided less by the hopes of catching criminals and more by the expectation that fingerprints could reveal inherited traits.

Despite Galton’s best efforts, when surveying his research from the past decade in *Finger Prints*, he concluded that fingerprints did not contain such evidence. He definitively declared that “no peculiar pattern...characterizes persons of any of the above races.” And yet, despite his admission that “hard fact had made hope no longer justifiable”, a closer look at Galton’s writings reveals that racial typologies were never far from his thoughts. The conflicted speculation, conjecture, and hesitation in Galton’s racial rhetoric in *Finger Prints* can be understood as a deliberate strategy, one which allowed him to perpetuate a strong racial and imperial research program even when his scientific data undermined it.

This combination of speculation and data would be necessary for his eventual development of eugenics, a political program of selective breeding to improve, in his view the human race.

Throughout *Finger Prints*, Galton continued to alternate, sometimes in the space of a single sentence, between claiming that fingerprints were and were not marked by racial difference.



Detail from the title page to Galton's *Finger Prints* (1892). He has used his own fingerprints to form the design — Source .

His remarks illustrate the tensions of disciplines like anthropology and comparative anatomy in this period, which attempted to simultaneously identify both deviant individuals *and* visible traces of generalisable criminal types from body parts.

In the second to last chapter, Galton definitively detailed his findings on “Race and Classes”. After examining the impressions of various races and classes, he determined that they “may all be spoken of as identical in the character of their finger prints”. To demonstrate the lack of difference across racial groups, he even included a table displaying the similar frequency of arch patterns in the right fore-finger of each group.

TABLE XXX.
Frequency of Arches in the Right Fore-Finger.

No. of Persons.	Race.	No. of Arches.	Per Cents.
250	English	34	13·6
250	Welsh	26	10·8
1332	Hebrew	105	7·9
250	Negro	27	11·3
<i>Hebrews in detail—</i>			
500	Boys, Bell Lane School . . .	35	7·0
400	Girls, Bell Lane School . . .	34	8·5
220	Boys, Tavistock St. & Hanway St.	18	8·2
212	Girls, Hanway Street School . .	18	8·5

Table displaying the arch patterns in the right fore-finger of various “racial groups”, from Galton's *Finger Prints* (1892) — Source .

But even in his

disavowals of racial difference in fingerprint patterns, Galton still searched for traces through which to decipher the devious and degenerate clues of suspect identities. Galton noted:

Their patterns are not, so far as I can find, different from those of others, they are not simpler... Still, whether it be from pure fancy on my part, or from the way in which they were printed, or from some real peculiarity, the general aspect of the Negro print strikes me as characteristic. The width of the ridges seems more uniform, their intervals more regular, and their courses more parallel than with us. In short, they give an idea of greater simplicity, due to causes that I have not yet succeeded in submitting to the test of measurement.

Despite the data, Galton's initial “great expectations” still inflected his analysis. His ideas about both the lack of evolutionary complexity of “degenerate” forms and the homogeneity he perceived between members of extra-European races underpinned his analysis from the outset.

It is telling that a hand that both individuates and that conveys information about extra-

European racial groups was, to Galton, a hand marked by “greater simplicity”. That it did not matter to Galton whether the “greater simplicity” he sensed in non-white hands lay in the faulty method of printing or in the hands themselves reveals that he saw these hands as posing a threat to his own empirical efforts. This failure, in fact, redoubles Galton’s recourse to his own analytical powers. He closes the chapter by stating that his conclusions do not apply to investigating the shape of the hand, which might yet offer racial insights. These scenes of detection in Galton’s writings allowed the Imperial fantasy, that extra-European others might be identified and controlled, to masquerade as a reality.



Example of the prints taken in India, overlaid by Galton's interpretation of their main structure, featured in his *Decipherment of Blurred Finger Prints* (1893) — Source .

The year following the publication of *Finger Prints*, Galton followed up with a supplemental text, *Decipherment of Blurred Finger Prints* (1893), which outlined his method for illuminating indistinct impressions. Its publication was occasioned by Galton's receipt of a round of prints from men in India, whose impressions had been taken once in 1878 and again in 1892. This provided a rare opportunity to demonstrate the persistence of impressions. Galton also saw it as an opportunity to demarcate the superiority of British science and his own.

Galton begins the text without even analyzing or exhibiting the prints. Instead, he takes a curious detour to focus on their context: “The documents are characteristically Oriental; they are on a common kind of apparently native-made paper, worm-eaten with many holes, and abundantly subscribed with attestations, names, ages, and dates, partly written in English and partly in native characters.” Having already published on the lack of racial signification in fingerprints, Galton attempted to secure racial characteristics through other means.

Holmes, of course, could realize Conan Doyle's fantasy of a textual body unconsciously inscribing its traces in a way that Galton, bound by the disappointing readings of his empirical data, never could. And yet, the meaningless script of the fingerprint did not stop Galton from anxiously detecting “characteristic” and unconscious traces of race on its periphery. When he thanks the imperial bureaucracy for putting him “into the possession of such interesting materials”, he conflates these foreign bodies of these men with the texts themselves.

Galton contrasts these “Oriental” methods of fingerprinting to his own in order to demonstrate the superiority of European science. He notes his dissatisfaction with the Indian method of printing and quality of the paper, which he assumes uses Indian dye or watercolor. The Indian materials, he complains, were “too coarse” when compared to those in his English laboratory. Whereas Indian methods for printing are “moist”, “blackened all over”, “coarse”, and blurry, those in Galton's lab are “regular”, “rapid”, “clear”, “uniform”, “very thin”, and “uniformly of a high-level order of goodness”. His invocation of morality — not only subtly with contrasts of light/dark imagery, but explicitly with the reference to “goodness” — explicitly justified the



Example of prints taken in Bengal, India, featured in Galton's *Decipherment of Blurred Finger Prints* (1893) — Source .

superiority of British empiricism and so implicitly hinted at the necessity of his empire's "civilizing" rule.

Galton then further locates the blurred and indistinct qualities of the fingerprints in what he perceives to be generic characteristics of the Indian race. He attributes the indistinctness of the impressions to hard manual labor and to "the disintegration of skin, owing to the advanced ages of the persons in 1892 [...] which I presume corresponds to greater ages among ourselves, since Indian children are more precocious than ours." The logic of racial

contamination underpinned this apparent reflexivity: fingerprints were originally introduced for Europeans to distinguish between the otherwise indistinguishable mass of extra-European peoples, who themselves produced "indecipherable" fingerprints. In this way, Galton's prints exemplify the postcolonial scholar Homi Bhabha's discussion of the "repeated hesitancy afflicting the colonialist discourse when it contemplates its discriminated subjects; the inscrutability of the Chinese, the unspeakable rites of the Indians, the indescribable habits of the Hottentots."



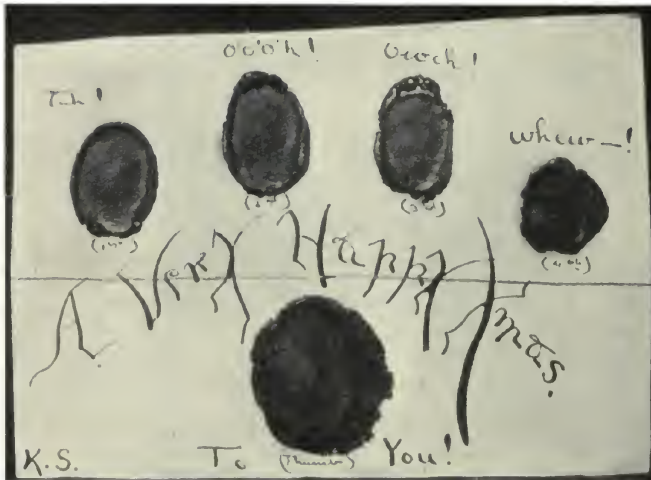
Table displaying the outlines of the patterns of the digits of eight persons, taken at random, from Galton's *Finger Prints* (1892) — Source: Wellcome Library (CC-BY 4.0) .

This "art of decipherment", as Galton called it, reified the racial categories from which it emerged. Patterns, like foreign peoples, were likely to deceive. Therefore, they needed expert scrutiny to decipher them. For instance, Galton wrote in *Scientific American* that when looking at an enlarged reproduction of fingerprints "one might be deceived and take such a production for a specimen of graphic ornamentation of barbarous origin". The act of deciphering any fingerprint, even in a completely deracinated context, was linked to the act of disciplining, segregating, and classifying racialized bodies. The criminal and Indian body — both understood as sites of interpretation, enforcement, and diagnosis — became objects of scientific expertise.

In this respect, the pedagogical component of Galton's text — his cautious and painstaking explanations of how to see "the facts and their interpretation" — aimed to give readers the power not just to classify their own fingerprints but to mark foreign bodies as such. Galton drew upon the logic of detection to present readers with the fantasy that seemingly dangerous bodies could, under the right gaze, be controlled. And yet, it was precisely the success of fingerprint identification in the "colonial laboratory" of India abroad that aided the technique's return to the center of empire in 1901, thus turning English citizens, too, into colonial subjects that needed to be tracked, surveilled, and deciphered.

★

How the fingerprint familiar to us today ended up emptied of meaning is part of the larger shift in locating criminality on the criminal's body to locating it in the criminal record. As biologists increasingly looked to genes for the secrets of heredity, law enforcement took over the scientific domain of interpreting, standardizing, and administering fingerprint technology. The fingerprint's dominance as an archival sign made it increasingly necessary to separate its identificatory functions from dubious diagnostic research like Galton's.



A Christmas greeting card to Galton "from an affectionate and admiring friend", featured in Vol. III of *The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton* (1914) by Karl Pearson — Source .

At stake in wiping away these anthropological traces was the legal reputation of an increasingly powerful and "self evident" forensic technology. "It is not to the finger-print expert's advantage", the head of Chicago's fingerprint school cautioned in 1925, "to be associated, in the minds of the public, with fortune tellers and palm-readers. The science of fingerprint identification is a real science and should not be dragged to the level of the pseudo sciences."

Galton, for his part, never tired of searching for ways to identify characteristics that could be selectively bred for eugenic improvement. His obsession with quantifying racial difference led him to devise "analytical portraiture", invent geometric notation for facial profiles, measure the noses of exceptional English leaders, and calculate the efficiency of people with differing hair colors. Galton even attempted to track physiognomic changes in Englishmen by studying their portraits in the National Gallery.

Revisiting the early history of the fingerprint reminds us that ostensibly color-blind identification techniques often contain the biases and cultural assumptions of their makers. In this light, Galton's search to reify racial difference in the body bears a striking resemblance to the contemporary search for the "crime gene" and other personality markers in DNA. That his hunt may have been pseudo-scientific did not make the fears and assumptions that guided his research any less influential, or dangerous.

Ava Kofman is a journalist based in Brooklyn. Her writing on technology has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, *VICE* and elsewhere. Follow her on Twitter [here](#).

Public Domain Works

- *Finger Prints* (1893), by Francis Galton.
 - [Internet Archive](#)

- *Supplementary chapter to 'Finger prints'. Decipherment of blurred finger prints* (1893), by Francis Galton.
 - Internet Archive
- *The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton* (1914), by Karl Pearson.
 - Internet Archive
- "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder", in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (1903), by Arthur Conan Doyle.
 - Wikisource

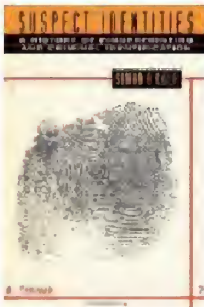
Further Reading



The Racial Hand in the Victorian Imagination (Cambridge University Press, 2015)

by Aviva Briefel

An exploration into the racial significance assigned to hands around the fin de siècle — how the hands of colonized subjects became vital sites of fascination and interpretation in late-Victorian imperial narratives.



Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification (Harvard University Press, 2002)

by Simon Cole

Simon Cole reveals how the history of criminal identification is far murkier than we have been led to believe, uncovering the fascinating interplay of our elusive individuality, police and state power, and the quest for scientific certainty.

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Antonin Scalia's Death Prompts Confusion, Conspiracy Theories snopes.com

<http://www.snopes.com/2016/02/15/scalia-autopsy-conspiracy-theories/>

The family of Justice Antonin Scalia declined an autopsy, sparking multiple theories about his cause of death.

Kim LaCapria

9 hours ago



On 13 February 2016, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died on a Texas hunting trip.

Although Scalia was 79 years old at the time of his death, he was also considered to be in reasonably good health and had no stated intention of retiring. The event was unexpected, and as with most unexpected deaths, there was initially some confusion over the accuracy of the news. Because of that and his family's decision not to

order an autopsy (and because his death occurred in an election year) speculation and rumormongering immediately ensued.

Immediately, social media users speculated as to whether the timing of his death was suspect enough to warrant additional attention. On 14 February 2016, a Facebook user published the following status update, encapsulating one of many intricate theories:

The man you see shaking hands with Barack Obama is the owner of the Texas ranch resort Justice Scalia was found dead at. His name is John Poindexter and he was earlier honored during a ceremony by Obama.

Mr. Poindexter was the one who helped get Justice Scalia declared dead w/o an actual medical examination. (It was apparently done over the phone based upon his descriptions of the Justice's condition) He was also the one who was the link between Justice Scalia's death and the response of federal authorities.

No autopsy was ordered...

Much of the post's text appeared to be based on details published in a 14 February 2016 *New York Times* article specifically about the discovery of Scalia's body:

When Justice Antonin Scalia did not respond to a knock at the door of his suite at the Cibolo Creek Ranch at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, John B. Poindexter, the



scalia murdered

property's owner, was not alarmed ... It was less than three hours later, when Mr. Poindexter tried again, that he found Justice Scalia's body.

Justice Scalia had no pulse and was clearly dead, Mr. Poindexter recalled in an interview on Sunday.

The Facebook post asserted Scalia was "apparently" declared dead via telephone, a circumstance described across several paragraphs in the *Times*' article. But that also appeared to be anecdotal, based on an e-mails from Texas judge David Beebe:

Just after 11 a.m., Mr. Poindexter and a friend of Justice Scalia's tried the door again, again to no answer. They entered the room, and it took no medical training, Mr. Poindexter said, to recognize that Justice Scalia was dead.

Mr. Poindexter called a hospital and, without identifying Justice Scalia, reported what had happened. A hospital official, Mr. Poindexter said, assessed that it would be impossible to resuscitate Justice Scalia, and ranch officials contacted the United States Marshals Service.

That call set into motion hours of intense discussions about how to navigate the protocols associated with the death of a Supreme Court justice outside the Washington area.

"No identity or clue was given that this was not another body found by hunters in the desert," David Beebe, a justice of the peace, wrote in an email Saturday night.

Judge Beebe said County Judge Cinderela Guevera had ultimately pronounced Justice Scalia dead by telephone and "ruled it natural causes based on credible information." She did not respond to messages on Sunday.

The *Times* didn't clarify whether Beebe was present, party to the flurry of activity in or around Cibolo Creek Ranch on 13 February 2016, or how he came to learn details of the chain of declaration of death.

Beebe's relevance was further detailed in a 14 February 2016 NPR piece:

When Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died Saturday in Presidio County, it wasn't easy to arrange the inquest, the judicial inquiry into the death ... I was reporting from a candidate forum in neighboring Brewster County. Officials from all three counties were in attendance. David Beebe, the justice of the peace for Precinct 1 in Presidio County, was there, too. Shortly after 1 p.m., he received a request to handle an inquest for "a dead body" back in his county.

Beebe responded he was also far away, too, busy at the political forum. The

deceased wasn't identified. Bishop said she would find an alternate. In this border county, sometimes the dead body is an undocumented migrant. Identification can take weeks; death can wait.

Bishop contacted the third choice, Presidio County Judge Cinderella Guevara, who was also unable to make the drive to Cibolo Creek Ranch. Connecting with the county sheriff there, she officially handled the inquest — over the phone — pronouncing Justice Scalia dead just before 2 p.m. The Texas Code of Criminal Procedures allows justices of the peace to pronounce death via phone when deemed reasonable.

It wasn't until after 3 p.m. that the news started to make its way to the local officials at the candidates forum. Phones lit up. People stopped paying attention to the debate on the stage. I was sitting near Judge Beebe, and we rushed out of the school auditorium together. We drove straight to the only funeral home in the area, in Alpine — where there was no answer at the door.

As the additional information from an on-the-scene press account indicated, Beebe was initially contacted, but not advised that the death in question involved Scalia. When Beebe and the reporter learned that the deceased was in fact a Supreme Court Justice, both hastily traveled a long distance to the funeral home closest to Cibolo Creek Ranch. In the interim, Judge Cinderella Guevara declared Scalia dead per the jurisdiction's protocol (by phone).

Poindexter provided further details about the chain of events surrounding Scalia's death in a 15 February 2016 *San Antonio Express-News* article:

"We discovered the judge in bed, a pillow over his head. His bed clothes were unwrinkled ... He was lying very restfully. It looked like he had not quite awakened from a nap," he said.

Scalia, 79, did not have a pulse and his body was cold, and after consulting with a doctor at a hospital in Alpine, Poindexter concluded resuscitation would have been futile. He then contacted federal authorities, at first encountering a series of answering services because he was calling on a weekend.

"Ultimately they became available and handled it superbly. They flew in by helicopter. They told me to secure the ranch, which I did until this morning," he said.

That article concluded by reporting that the "body of the Supreme Court justice was moved to an El Paso funeral home early Sunday," per the wishes of Scalia's family. The Facebook post asserted that "no autopsy was ordered" shortly after stating Scalia was pronounced dead via phone, creating the impression that the two details were somehow linked and some barrier existed to an official forensic investigation.

However, a 14 February 2016 *Chicago Tribune* article reported that Scalia's family declined an autopsy and simply requested his body be returned to Washington as soon as possible:

Chris Lujan, a manager for Sunset Funeral Homes ... says an autopsy was not performed.

He says Scalia's family didn't think a private autopsy was necessary and requested his remains be flown home as soon as possible.

The county official who declared Scalia dead Saturday did not order an autopsy after finding he had died of natural causes. She said investigators told her there were no signs of foul play.

That article included a 15 February 2016 statement from the U.S. Marshals Service about Scalia's death, confirming Scalia declined security detail for the trip:

The U.S. Marshals Service routinely coordinates with the U.S. Supreme Court police to provide security for the Justices, however, Justices may decline USMS protection. In this instance, the USMS detail was declined for the personal trip to the hunting resort in Texas, so USMS personnel were not present at the ranch. Deputy U.S. Marshals from the Western District of Texas responded immediately upon notification of Justice Scalia's passing.

The *Washington Post* confirmed Scalia's family opposed an autopsy:

As official Washington tried to process what his demise means for politics and the law, some details of Scalia's final hours remained opaque. As late as Sunday afternoon, for example, there were conflicting reports about whether an autopsy should have been performed. A manager at the El Paso funeral home where Scalia's body was taken said that his family made it clear they did not want one.

Speculation over the lack of autopsy wasn't confined to social media. As the *Dallas Observer* reported on 15 February 2016, conspiracy magnate Alex Jones leapt into the fray almost immediately:

Radio talk show host Alex Jones, never one to pass up an opportunity to stir the pot, said he feels this happened "in his gut." ...

Scalia was not a young man. He was 79 years old and friends at the West Texas ranch where he died say he went to bed early because he didn't feel well. There are many natural causes of death that could be responsible. A heart attack seems to be the most probable cause, and local media are reporting that his death certificate will read "myocardial infarction." Other media reports say the cause will be deemed natural. Either way, no official is suggesting homicide.

Let's not let that stop us from conjecture. Besides, there are also a few man-made ways to kill him that would fit the very thin facts — some of which would be hard to prove even if examiners conducted an autopsy.

The Facebook post linked above is an excellent example of such conjecture. It depicted Cibola Creek Ranch owner John Poindexter with President Obama implying some kind of

connection. However, that photo was taken on or around 20 October 2009, when Poindexter was invited by President Obama to the White House for a 2009 ceremony in which he was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for heroism for his service in Vietnam:

The Presidential Unit Citation, the highest honor given to a military unit, has been issued since World War II and is awarded to U.S. Armed Forces units that display extraordinary heroism in combat against an armed enemy force. It has been bestowed roughly 100 times, Obama said.

The initially confusing circumstances of Antonin Scalia's death were not at all suspicious. Poindexter was circumspect in securing the scene out of respect for Scalia, and reaching an official from a remote area in Texas on a Saturday was complicated. In compliance with local protocol, Scalia's death was declared by the first available judge via phone, and after Scalia was transported to a funeral home his family declined an autopsy. Cibolo Creek Ranch owner John Poindexter was indeed photographed with President Obama, but that occurred during a 2009 ceremony for veterans.

We were unable to find any other connection between Poindexter and President Obama, nor anything that made us suspect that Justice Antonin Scalia's death was anything but the peaceful, ordinary death of a man who was nearly 80 years old.

Last updated: 15 February 2016

Originally published: 15 February 2016

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15 Historical Archeological Finds Discovered Beneath 50 Bowery, Former Atlantic Garden in Chinatown

untappedcities.com

02/16/2016 at 9:00 am

Posted In Architecture, New York

by michelle young



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-NYC

Artifacts uncovered at 50 Bowery in an archeological excavation. Photos by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Like many places in Chinatown, 50 Bowery is a site with layers and layers of history – since the days of the early settlement, it played host to waves of immigration and entertainment, and today is undergoing conversion into its latest incarnation: a 22-story hotel being developed by one of Chinatown's notable real estate families. Starting in December, we were given special access to the construction site at 50 Bowery, along with the numerous archeological

finds discovered beneath the site. While the New York Times has also recently covered the history and controversy amidst this historically rich site, we will show here the many unique remnants found during the excavation for the hotel.

For the historical documentation, 50 Bowery Holdings, LLC hired Chrysalis Archeological Consultants, the renown firm that has lent its expertise to the burial finds beneath Washington Square Park and other notable sites in New York City. As 50 Bowery was not landmarked and is not within a historic district, the Chu family did not have any legal obligation to perform an archeological study – but Jonathan Chu and his sister Lauren become fascinated by the site's history and agreed to fund an assessment. The Chu siblings have also been avidly collecting ephemera from the site's history, sometimes accidentally bidding against each other on eBay. As Jonathan shows us, some of what they've been able to purchase online has been of far better quality than those he ave found in museums, and the items form a nice counterpart to the actual artifacts uncovered in the archeological dig.

Items purchased by the Chu siblings about 50 Bowery and its surrounding

sites, including the Chinese Tuxedo

Walking through the finds with Alyssa Loorya, President and Principal Investigator

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50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Burgerspital Wine Bottle

The Bürgerspital Vineyard in

Germany is one of the oldest vineyards in Europe still in production, first planted in the year 1334. The flat, round bottles from Bürgerspital, known as *Bocksbeutel*, were based on the shape of a leather sack pouch and are quite similar in shape today. In fact, according to the Bürgerspital website "In 1726 the Council of the City of Würzburg decided that the 'Bocksbeutel' be the mark of quality compared with poorly produced wines. At the 'Council's behest, the first sealed specimens of the Bocksbeutel are stored in Bürgerspital's cellars and the true, the pure, unadulterated wine, rapidly and brilliantly triumphed', reported

the District Archivist Sebastian Göbl." Loorya reports that there are currently attempts to import this wine to the United States.

14. Atlantic Hotel Plate



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Atlantic Hotel Plate

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Many of these thick, ceramic utilitarian plates were found on the site at 50 Bowery, including several stamped "HOTEL," dumped into the alcoves of the Atlantic Garden. The archeological analysis suggests that portions of the Atlantic Garden may have been repurposed from the structure of the Theatre Hotel that came before it.

Other plates found at the site were more detailed, including this plate that tells the Chinese "Willow" folklore story, a popular design used on porcelain plate ware from England starting in the late 18th century.

15. Beer Steins

Photos by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Various beer steins were found, which is logical given the historical usage of the property. One thing to note says Loorya is that the intact nature of most of the finds, or the ability to put pieces back together easily, demonstrates that these archeological finds are primary deposits.



One beer bottle, labeled CC Haley & Company's Celebrated California Pop Beer, comes from sometime between 1872 and 1885. The Chrysalis team attempted to make a small batch of the California Pop Beer, and Loorya says "it was really tasty. A minty berry, lemonade-y thing, flavored with spruce and wintergreen." The beer also contained spruce oils, sassafras and ginger root.

Intact, hand blown bottles. None of the bottles found at 50 Bowery were machine produced, but were blown into a mold, which dates the items to the 19th century.



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Ber Steins-NYC

Lauren Chu tells us that the family is still working out where the archeological finds will be showcased, but they will be somewhere within the hotel. In addition, the hotel will house an outpost of the Museum of Chinese America.

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50 Bowery-Chrysalis Archeological Consultants-Artifacts-Chinatown-Chu Enterprises-NYC

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50 Bowery-Chrysalis Archeological Consultants-Artifacts-Chinatown-
Chu Enterprises-NYC_3

of Chrysalis Archeological Consultants, she informed us that the team even “brewed recipes based on this project – we made bitters, we made a beer, and an elixir of long life.” The site at 50 Bowery was at varying points a tavern (possibly the Bull’s Head Tavern which was either partially at or around the property), the Atlantic Garden (a famous German beer garden), a theater, a hotel and a stove dealership. In more recent years, it has been a Chinese restaurant, a Popeyes, and a Duane Reade.



50 Bowery-Chrysalis Archeological Consultants-Artifacts-Chinatown-
Chu Enterprises-NYC copy

Jonathan Chu at the construction site in December

Loorya contends that there’s a “great level of continuity of this one plot of land as a stopping point for travelers in and around the city, and will be again.” The items discovered also tell the story of changing immigrant communities. 50 Bowery was on the edge of what was Kleindeutschland, settled after by the Italians and the Chinese. As such, the finds include bottles, dishes, pots, tiles, and more, brought together through the continuity of culture and uses at this

site. Whereas the previous structures at 50 Bowery have come and gone, the history lives on in the myriad of items found here.

Here are 15 items in the study we found the most fascinating:

1. The Elixir of Long Life



50 Bowery-Elixir of Long Life-
Glass Vial-Archeological
Finds-NYC.jpg

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

One of the recipes the Chrysalis team made was an “elixir of long life,” inspired by this small glass vial found on the site. Emblazoned on the bottle are the words “Die Keisserliche Privilegirt Attonatich W. Kronessents” which translates to “The Royal (Kaiser) Privileged Altona Essence.” According to the Chrysalis report, “this was a medicinal tincture produced under the auspices of the crown near Hamburg, Germany.”

Loorya places this bottle within the context of Prohibition, when medicinal beverages became an easier way to procure a drink during this time. “We were able to find a patent recipe for it, and it was one of the things that we brewed,” Loorya says. Unfortunately, she continues, “It tasted absolutely horrible.” Loorya describes that the tonic was meant to only be tasted a few drops at a time, placed

on the tongue.

2. Dr. Hostteter’s Stomach Bitters



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Dr Hoster Bitters

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Bitters go back to ancient Egypt, says Loorya, and they tend to have similar ingredients compared to those used today. Though they come in slender bottles now, they used to come in larger bottles like this one by Dr. Jacob Hostetter, based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who produced a best-selling bitter that was a whopping 94 proof. Though it was intended as protection against various maladies that

a pioneer explorer or Civil War soldier might catch, Dr. J. Hostetter’s bitters were not surprisingly also served as an actual drink ordered by the glass.

The team at Chrysalis made the bitters, infused over a two-week period, based on a recipe they found, and sought out all the natural ingredients, including Peruvian bark from local apothecaries and distributors online. Nonetheless, Loorya says, “I’m certainly not drinking it by the glass...but we gave out little bottles to people, and I’ve had friends who have used it in mixed drinks and they said it’s made the best Manhattans they’ve ever had.”

A portion of a poem from Hostetter’s United States Almanac from 1867, part of a million dollar advertising campaign by the company states:

For these, though Mineral nostrums fail,

Means of relief at last we hail,
HOSTETTER'S BITTERS medicine sure,
Not to *prevent*, alone, but *cure*.

Lauren Chu placed one of Hostetter's bottles inside a new time capsule in the foundation of 50 Bowery. An 1826 time capsule was sealed on the site during the construction of the theater but was never found. "Clearly someone got to it before us," says Loorya.

3. Architectural Remnants from the Atlantic Garden





50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Encaustic Tile.

In addition to discarded bottles and plates, Chrysalis uncovered parts of the Atlantic Garden itself. In the excavation, part of the wall and part of the floor of Atlantic Garden were uncovered with artifacts found in the dirt within. Loorya believes these tiles, created by the American Encaustic Tile Company, were extras because no mortar was found on them. They nonetheless show how colorful and decorated the building would have been. You can also find tiles by the prolific tile company in the Columbus Circle subway station.

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

The Atlantic Garden was so successful that they ended up expanding onto the plot of land next door to 50 Bowery to 52 Bowery, and all the way to the Elizabeth Street side. Eventually, the basement of the Atlantic Garden, which once had a bowling alley was filled up and built on top of.

In addition to these finds below ground, the Chu family removed a pulley from the vaulted retractable roof of the Atlantic Garden, bricks and

wooden beams from the structure before demolition began.

It should be noted that no artifacts or archeological structures were discovered from the 18th century, when the site could have been the Bull's Head Tavern. The Crysalis report notes, "It is possible, however, that the fieldstone portions of the wall uncovered at 50 Bowery were

remnants of the Bull's Head Tavern, incorporated into a nineteenth-century construction, either the 1825-1827 Theatre Hotel or the later structure of the Atlantic Garden," but the team found it more likely that those portions were more likely constructed at the same time.

4. German Mineral Water Bottle



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Berman Mineral Water Stoneware Bottle-NYC

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

"New Yorkers have always been drinking bottled water," Loorya jokes, but with valid supporting evidence. In addition to a 1790 bottle her team found at South Street Seaport, this stoneware bottle from Kronthal Springs in Kronberg, Germany was found at 50 Bowery. Some of the springs in Germany were known for their medicinal properties and were imported into the United States. Mineral water from Kronthal Springs were first bottled

in 1875. In 1899, 4000 cases of Kronthal mineral water were shipped to the United States.

5. North American Brewing Company Bottle



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The Star of David was used as a medieval brewer's symbol, known as the "Brewer's Star," which was used in the above bottle by the Brooklyn-based North American Brewing Company, and by other beer companies. According to this report, "the brewer's star was intended to symbolize purity; that is, a brewer who affixed the insignia to his product was thereby declaring his brew be completely pure of additives, adjuncts, etc. In fact, folklore has it that the six points of the star represented the six aspects of brewing most critical to purity: the water, the hops, the grain, the malt, the yeast, and the brewer. But others assert that the emblem's use by

beer-makers originated independently of the Jewish Star, and has no historical connection thereto...It is known that the star was the official insignia of the Brewer's Guild as early as the 1500s, and that its association with beer and brewing can be traced as far back as the late

1300s.”

6. Copper Pot Lid



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Copper Pot Lid for Pressure Cooker.jpg

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

It took a while for Chrysalis to figure out what these were – copper pressure cooker lids used to cook traditional German fare. Loorya believes these can be restored to look closer like their original shine. In addition to cooking ware, animal bones including a bone from a cow were discovered at the site and determined to be food remains. “Many had cut marks showing butchering or marks from utensils used by the diner,” the Chrysalis report

states.



7. Bottle with Paper Label



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Bowery Bottle-NYC

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

This light blue bottle is notable because it was discovered with the paper label still partially intact, with an address on the Bowery.



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Bowery Bottle-NYC-2

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

8. Zoolak Bottle

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Dozens of the light teal Zoolak bottles, containing a lightly fermented milk drink, were found at the site. It was created by a Dr. Daddirrian (whose name is on the bottle) and produced by Edgar E. Wright of Brooklyn. The recipe, for every 100 parts Zoolak included:

Water 87.69
 Proteid substances 3.98
 Fat 4.91
 Milk-sugar 2.03
 Alcohol 0.07
 Ash or mineral salts 0.78
 Lactic acid 0.50
 Carbon dioxide 0.04



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Dr Daddirrian Zoolax-Brooklyn-NYC

Loorya says Zoolak would probably be similar to kafir, based on what she has researched about it, but the team has

yet to recreate a sample to date.

You can catch advertisements for Zoolak on New York City billboards in vintage photographs.

9. English Creamer Jug



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Mildred Creamer-L Straus & Sons-Milk Creamer-NYC.2

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

This tiny milk creamer jug, known as the Mildred, comes from England and was imported by L. Straus & Sons, opened by Lazarus Straus, the father of Isidor Straus who purchased Macy's (and perished on the Titanic with his wife Ida).



10.
Lea &

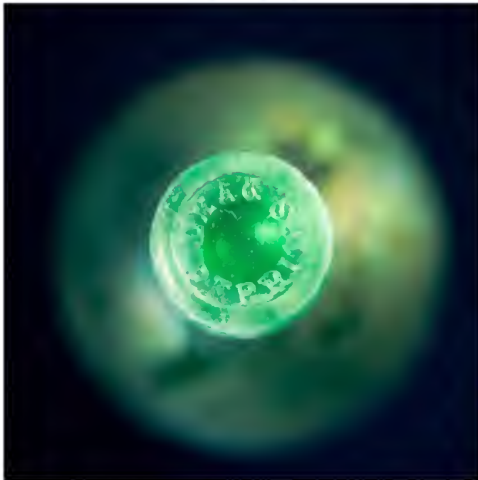
Perrins Worcestershire Sauce



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Dr Hoster Bitters-Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Bottle-England-NYC.jpg-2

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Starting in 1838, Lea & Perrins' Worcestershire Sauce was sold out of a chemist shop in Worcester, England run by John Wheeley Lea and William Henry Perrin. This bottle made its way to 50 Bowery and was found intact with the glass stopper, a style of bottle not in use until 1850.



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-Dr
Hoster Bitters-Lea & Perrins Worcestershire
Bottle-England-NYC

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

11. Burke's Ale and Stout Bottle



50 Bowery-Archeological Study-Chrysalis-E&J Burke Ale-NYC

Photo by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

E. and J. Burke, consisting of the brothers Edward Frederick Burke and John Burke, were Irish brewers, bottlers, distillers and importers who had locations in both Manhattan and Long Island City. For a period of time, they were the exclusive bottlers for stout brewed by Arthur Guinness, Son & Co.

Products produced under their own label had a cat as their mascot, seen at the bottom of the bottles (shown above). In 1943, Guinness bought the Burke brewery, the second brewery the company operated outside of Ireland and its first in the Americas.

12. Enormous Oysters



The above is one of the large oyster shells collected on the site. The size of a hand, it was of typical size for a pre-20th century oyster, according to Chrysalis. Oysters were consumed at a rapacious pace by both the city's rich and the poor. By the early 1900s, over 1 billion oysters were harvested per year from New York harbor. Read more about the tragic history of New York City's oysters and the multi-pronged efforts for their revival.

13. Bürgerspital Wine Bottle

Photos by Chrysalis Archeological Consultants

Are you afraid of the fairies? You should be. - European studies blog

typepad.co.uk



26 November 2014

A visit to the Gothic exhibition and reading reviews of Marina Warner's latest book, *Once Upon a Time: A Short History of Fairy Tale* have spirited me away to the popular literature which Dillon's University Bookshop in Torrington Place used to keep in the section labelled "Folk and Fairy".

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The corpus of old Spanish folk ballads (in Spanish, *romances*) is vast. They are known from early printed books, from the oral tradition (recorded from the 19th to the 21st centuries) of communities including the Sephardi of Salonika (victims of the Nazis) and North Africa (still surviving) and from a tiny number of medieval manuscripts.

The assumption is that they were conveyed by word of mouth from illiterate poet to illiterate listeners and finally consigned to paper. It is also sometimes thought that ballads started out as reports of the latest news of battles etc. fought on the frontier with Moorish Andalusia (the parallel is often drawn with the English-Scottish border ballads). And it was also commonly thought that Spanish literature, like the Spanish people, had a granite strain of realism in it, unlike the exaggerations of the French.

There is also a huge body of ballads composed by learned authors such as Góngora and García Lorca.

They're often studied on Spanish courses in British schools and universities, as they are usually quite short, the language is direct and the themes of love, sex and violence are of immediate interest.

Special attention is paid to the ballads on magical themes, but these are only a tiny proportion of the corpus. Smith's student anthology has 15 'novelesque' ballads (nos. 56-70), of which only two feature otherworldly beings.

My two favourites are *Conde Arnaldos* and *La Infantina*.

On the morning of St John's Day (the summer solstice) Count Arnaldos is out hunting with his hawk on his hand on the coast. He spies a faery-ship: its sails of silk and its rigging of gauze, its anchor of silver and its decking of coral. Aboard a sailor's song is so powerful that it calms the waves of the sea and draws the birds to settle on the mast. Arnaldos says to the sailor: 'Tell me your song.' The reply: 'I do not tell my song but to him who comes with me' ('Yo no digo esta canción / sino a quien conmigo va.')

The ballads often break off at a point of mystery. Did Arnaldos ever find out what the song was, and at what price?



Ship (BT)

Sailing ship from *Llibre de Consolat dels fets maritims* ... (Barcelona, 1627) British Library 501.g.6.

My second has an explicit ending, and it's not good news:

A knight goes hunting: his dogs grow tired and he loses his hawk. He takes cover under an oak (are you listening, Sir James Frazer?) and in the highest branches he sees a little princess (*infantina*). 'Do not be alarmed, Sir Knight, I am the daughter of the King and Queen of Castile: seven [NB] fairies [*fadas*] put a spell on me when I was in my nurse's arms to spend seven [NB] years alone on this mountain. I beg you, Sir Knight, take me into your company, if you wish as your wife, or, if not, as your mistress [Ilévésme en tu compañía, / si quisieres por mujer, / si no, sea por amiga].' The knight asks her to wait while he consults his mother. She replies: 'Woe be to the knight who leaves the girl alone.'



Hawking (BT)

A king out hawking, from British Library MS Royal 10 E IV

Mother advises him to take her as his mistress (she obviously doesn't want a fairy in the family). When he returns, the knight finds that the princess is with another knight and his company. He faints, and when he comes round the last words he hears are from the fairy princess: 'The knight who loses such a thing deserves a mighty punishment. I will be the judge, I will be the executioner: cut off his feet and hands and drag him through the town.'

Barry Taylor, Curator Hispanic Studies

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Posted by Olga Kerziouk at 10:00 AM

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Ohio man who ate roommate's brain denied parole for sixth time yahoo.com

Retrieved March 3rd 2016 10:10pm PST USA



9 hours ago

Reuters

(Reuters) - An Ohio man who killed his roommate and ate part of his brain almost 40 years ago was denied parole for the sixth time, prison officials said on Thursday.

David Allen Chapin, 60, was deemed "unsuitable for release" by the Ohio Parole Board on Wednesday, said JoEllen Smith of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

Chapin shot Donald Liming in the eye in their apartment in Milford, Ohio, during an argument over religion on Oct. 3, 1978. Chapin was a Baptist, while Liming had said he was a Catholic, a Buddhist and a pagan, the Cincinnati Enquirer reported.

At the time of the shooting, both men were 23 and longtime friends, the newspaper said.

During the murder trial, Chapin pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. He told a court ordered psychiatrist that he ate Liming's brain as part of a "mutual agreement" between the roommates, the newspaper said.

Chapin, serving a life sentence at the Allen Correctional in Lima, Ohio, cannot be considered for parole again until December 2018, Smith said.

Clermont County Prosecutor Vince Faris said his office would continue to object to the release of Chapin, supporting relatives of Liming who want Chapin to remain in prison.

(Reporting by Justin Madden in Chicago; Editing by Andrew Hay)

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Axe Murder Hollow

Excerpted from Spooky Pennsylvania

retold by S.E. Schlosser

http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2009/03/axe_murder_hollow.html

Susan and Ned were driving through a wooded empty section of highway. Lightning flashed, thunder roared, the sky went dark in the torrential downpour.

"We'd better stop," said Susan.

Ned nodded his head in agreement. He stepped on the brake, and suddenly the car started to slide on the slick pavement. They plunged off the road and slid to a halt at the bottom of an incline.

Pale and shaking, Ned quickly turned to check if Susan was all right. When she nodded, Ned relaxed and looked through the rain soaked windows.

"I'm going to see how bad it is," he told Susan, and went out into the storm. She saw his blurry figure in the headlight, walking around the front of the car. A moment later, he jumped in beside her, soaking wet.

"The car's not badly damaged, but we're wheel-deep in mud," he said. "I'm going to have to go for help."

Susan swallowed nervously. There would be no quick rescue here. He told her to turn off the headlights and lock the doors until he returned.

Axe Murder Hollow. Although Ned hadn't said the name aloud, they both knew what he had been thinking when he told her to lock the car. This was the place where a man had once taken an axe and hacked his wife to death in a jealous rage over an alleged affair. Supposedly, the axe-wielding spirit of the husband continued to haunt this section of the road.

Outside the car, Susan heard a shriek, a loud thump, and a strange gurgling noise. But she couldn't see anything in the darkness.

Frightened, she shrank down into her seat. She sat in silence for a while, and then she noticed another sound. Bump. Bump. Bump. It was a soft sound, like something being blown by the wind.

Suddenly, the car was illuminated by a bright light. An official sounding voice told her to get out of the car. Ned must have found a police officer. Susan unlocked the door and stepped out of the car. As her eyes adjusted to the bright light, she saw it.

Hanging by his feet from the tree next to the car was the dead body of Ned. His bloody throat had been cut so deeply that he was nearly decapitated. The wind swung his corpse back and forth so that it thumped against the tree. Bump. Bump. Bump.

Susan screamed and ran toward the voice and the light. As she drew close, she realized the light was not coming from a flashlight. Standing there was the glowing figure of a man with a smile on his face and a large, solid, and definitely real axe in his hands. She backed away from the glowing figure until she bumped into the car.

“Playing around when my back was turned,” the ghost whispered, stroking the sharp blade of the axe with his fingers. “You’ve been very naughty.”

The last thing she saw was the glint of the axe blade in the eerie, incandescent light.

You can read more Ghost Stories by S.E. Schlosser in Spooky Pennsylvania.

Last updated 12/13/2014 15:23:14
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http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2009/03/axe_murder_hollow.html

This site is best viewed while eating marshmallows around a campfire under a starry sky.

Baby tested last year for spontaneous human combustion has died

doubtfulnews.com

February 19, 2016 • 5 Comments

A sad update to a very disturbing story that we reported on last year around this time and back in 2013. Two babies from the same family in India were treated for burns which the family alleged was the result of them spontaneously catching on fire multiple times. Media in India and around the world reported that cause as if it was factual. The children were never observed to catch on fire while under hospital care.

Baby Rahul was tested extensively in the hospital in 2013 before being released. They could not find anything unusual about him and ultimately did not come to a conclusion about how he was burned though there was a loose end we found that other villagers has problems with spontaneous fires possibly related to phosphorus in cow dung used as fuel. There was great suspicion that this was a case of abuse since spontaneous combustion of flesh is not possible. Medical officials had petitioned for protection of this child. Then, the story turned worse as Rahul's seven day old brother was brought in for the same condition in 2015. Once again, the doctors could find nothing wrong and the child, Jeyaramachandran, was released from the hospital as the rest of us gaped in amazement that this type of incident could occur. Again. Rumors continued that this was a "genetic" problem. While calls for an investigation were made, once again, none was ever made. This child, aged 1, also called Sanjay in this article, was said to have been suffering from vomiting and diarrhea. He died en route to the hospital. The police have not registered a case for investigation. This type of death is probably very common in this area of the world.

Mysterious fires are frequently reported in India, Malaysia and Egypt. Often they are blamed on ghosts and evil spirits and that is found to be acceptable in some cultures. Obviously, the western world sees these as arson, accidents or abuse.

idoubtit

Editor and owner of Doubtful News. Writer, specializing in science and society, science policy and education. View all posts by idoubtit →

5 comments for "Baby tested last year for spontaneous human combustion has died"

1. Brian Dunning
February 19, 2016 at 4:50 PM

No word of a criminal investigation on the parents?

• fatimavh
February 19, 2016 at 5:34 PM

I guess not, or not yet. The article says, "The police have not registered a case for

investigation.”

• idoubtit

February 19, 2016 at 6:14 PM

For whatever reasons, they seem reluctant to pursue this path. And the child is dead.

2. Bob

February 19, 2016 at 8:22 PM

>:(

3. Susan Gerbic

February 21, 2016 at 11:20 AM

How very sad.

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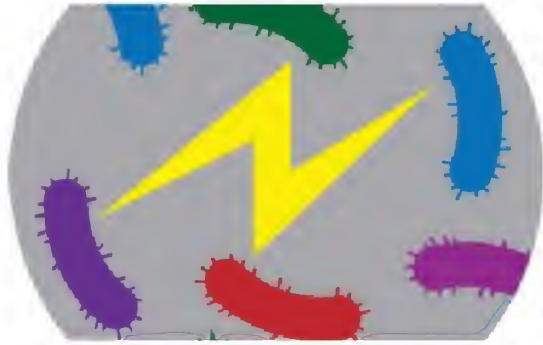
Bacteria Can Convey Electrical Messages the Same Way Neurons Do

scientificamerican.com

Bacteria Can Convey Electrical Messages the Same Way Neurons Do

Electrical signaling was previously thought to occur only in multicellular organisms

• By Diana Kwon on March 1, 2016



Bacteria may be ancient organisms, but don't call them primitive. Despite being unicellular, they can behave collectively—sharing nutrients with neighbors, moving in concert with others and even committing suicide for the greater good of their colony. Molecules that travel from cell to cell enable such group behavior in a signaling process called quorum sensing. Now new evidence reveals that bacteria may have another way to “talk” to one another: communication via electrical signaling—a mechanism previously thought to occur only in multicellular organisms.

In 2010 molecular biologist Gürol Süel, now at the University of California, San Diego, set out to understand how a soil bacterium called *Bacillus subtilis* could grow into massive communities of more than a million cells and still thrive. He and his colleagues found that once the colony reaches a critical size, bacteria on the periphery stop reproducing to leave core cells with a sufficient nutrient supply.

But that observation led to the question of how the edge cells receive word to cease dividing. In a recent follow-up study, Süel discovered that the intercellular signals in this case were in fact electrical. The messages travel via ion channels, proteins on a cell's surface that control the flow of charged particles—in this case, potassium ions—into and out of a cell. The opening and closing of these channels can change the charges of neighboring cells, inducing them to release such particles and thereby relaying electrical signals from one cell to the next. “We've known that bacteria had ion channels and people have assigned them different functions, but only in the context of the single cell,” Süel says. “Now we're seeing that they're also being used to coordinate behavior over millions of cells.” The study appears in the journal *Nature*.

Electrical signaling of this type is also how neurons in our brain pass along information. This and other findings are therefore prompting scientists to reevaluate their assumptions about single-celled life. “Bacteria have been thought of as limited because they are not multicellular,” says Steve Lockless, a biologist at Texas A&M University who was not involved in the study. But as unicellular organisms increasingly offer evidence of multifaceted behaviors, that may not be the case for much longer.

This article was originally published with the title “The Connection Was Electric”

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Bandage Man

A bit of Oregon esoterica for everyone this Friday morning, and it's a ghost story to boot: The Bandage Man of Cannon Beach.

The Bandage Man is a phantom of a man completely wrapped in bandages that haunts this small community. The bloody figure, who smells of rotting flesh, jumps into vehicles passing on a road outside of town, notably pickup trucks or open-topped cars, but also sedans, station wagons, and even sports cars. Sometimes the mummy breaks windows or leaves behind bits of bloody or foul-smelling bandages. One legend has it that he is the ghost of a dead logger cut to pieces in a sawmill accident.

The Bandage Man is sometimes said to eat dogs and may have murdered several people. He appears on the short approach road connecting US Highway 101 to Cannon Beach, between the town and where Highway 26 intersects with 101. The phantom always vanishes just before reaching town.

I first came across the story of Bandage Man in the book *Ghosts, Critters & Sacred Places of Washington and Oregon*, and it stood out because it's not the typical "sounds and thumps in the night" type of ghost story that fills books like these.

Not surprisingly, there's not much on the web about Bandage Man; digging around only reveals a handful of sites, with pretty much the same one or two paragraph description. However, I did find this post on the MysteryPlanet MSN Group that sheds light on the origin of the legend:

I was googling on the chance that I might find some mention somewhere of the Bandage Man. I have been aware of this story for over forty years. For I was a child in the community where it got it's start. I knew some of the family of the kid that first encountered the Bandage Man. There is an old road, that for all the years I was growing up was known as "Bandage Man Road". It was just an old section of Highway 101 that had been bypassed when a new section put in place, but it was still accessible and wasn't very long-just a short loop off of the highway-the whole thing from end to end could be driven in maybe five minutes or so.

This loop of road was a popular place for local kids to go park and makeout.

That is where the story started. One night, two of the local kids were up there doing just what teenaged boys and girls do when they are parked on dark lonely roads. The boy had an old chevy pickup and his girl and he were sitting in the cab. All off a sudden they felt the truck sort of lean, like something was moving around

in the bed of the truck. They turned to look out the rear window and there looking back was a bandaged face, with only some wierd looking eyes showing through eyeholes in the bandages. The bandaged figure started beating on the glass, and the top of the cab. The kid started his engine, got it gear and tore out of there-his girlfriend screaming in terror as the man in the back continued his pounding. Any of you who've been to Bandage Man road, or Cannon Beach, know how curvey the roads are and to drive them at highspeed is dangerous. On they went-after what seemed an eternity they made it to downtown Cannon Beach, where the boy's family owned a service station that they lived next door to in green house. Once they got there, they looked in the back and the Bandaged figure was no where to be seen.

I first heard this story back in 1960-61. And it's the original version. Some of the family of the kid still lives around here too, I know two of his brothers.

I have never heard of a repeat appearance by the Bandage Man.

I guess you'd better watch out if you're driving around Cannon Beach, if you believe that sort of thing...

AuthorJonPosted onMarch 11, 2005February 20, 2012

5 thoughts on "Bandage Man"



1. **monkeyinabox** says:
March 11, 2005 at 3:43 pm

Thank goodness I read this entry today. I have never heard of The Bandage Man before, but now I am atleast prepared, rather than ending up like the guy in the cell phone commercial who picks up the hitchhiker wearing the hockey mask.



2. **Anonymous** says:
March 23, 2005 at 8:40 pm

I saw it with my wife and son over 15 years ago on the described stretch of road. We slowed, but didn't stop. I have no question as to what we saw, although we didn't understand it at the time. Only heard recently of the legend.



3. **Anonymous** says:
May 18, 2005 at 12:33 pm

i read about this in the book OEGONS GHOSTS AND MONSTERS AND THIS VERSION SOUNDS A LITTLE MORE BELIVEABLE BUT IM STILL ALITTLE SCEPTIC ABOUT THE WHOLE DOG EATING THING BUT IT STILL INTERESTS ME

**4. Anonymous says:**

September 6, 2005 at 11:31 pm

I saw this with a group of freinds, about two years ago. We were traveling home to Portland from the beach. We go to the beach in middle of the night, so it was about 3 in the morning when we saw "The Bandage Man"..We saw a man running (in a strange fashion)down the highway...with strips of white cloth hanging from his body...We had no idea what we saw, and we were freaked out! We didn't know if it was a ghost, or some crazy man. Funny thing is that none of us knew of the legend at the time. A few months later my mother was talking about the ghost legends of Oregon...and "Bandage Man" came up..I was in shock!

**5. library clerk says:**

December 15, 2005 at 4:45 pm

I just read an account of bandage man in a book called Oregon's Ghosts and Monsters by Mike Helm, published in '93 descibing an account of "Bandage Man" after 1979 at Bill's Tavern.

This is the personal website and online identity of Jon Abernathy, aka Chuggnutt. This front page and most of this site consists of my blog wherein I post my musings on technology, pop culture, and whatever else piques my interest, as well as occasional original fiction. I also have two other blogs: The Brew Site (I write about beer) and Hack Bend (I write about Bend, Oregon, where I live).

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Beams Built of Diatom Boast Record-Setting Strength

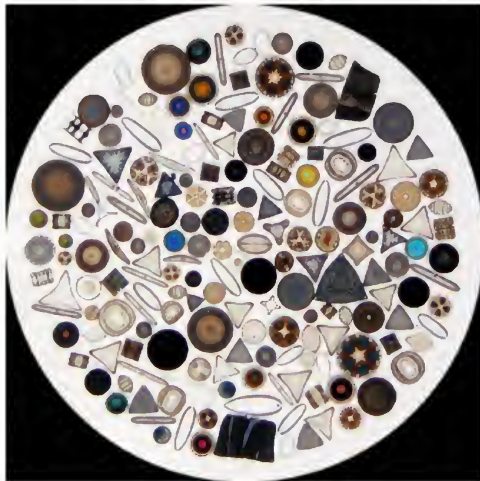
scientificamerican.com

How scientists fabricated the beams is almost as extraordinary as their toughness.

- By Jennifer Frazer on March 8, 2016

Beams made of sawn diatom shells and poked with a diamond-tipped probe until they cracked have revealed that the microbial armor has the highest strength-to-weight ratio of any known biological material. According to the scientists who conducted the study, the remarkable toughness of this material is likely due to its honeycomb-like architecture and flawless silica build.

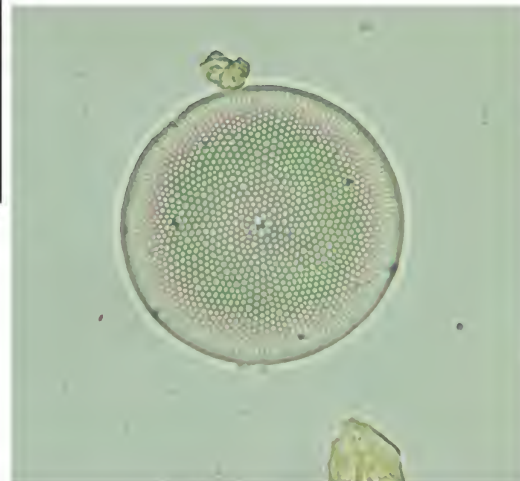
Diatoms are single-celled phytoplankton, or marine algae. They come in a dizzying array of shapes and colors much beloved by this author.



Diatom2.jpg

By Wipeter - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5682386>

The scientists studied the shells – called frustules – of *Coscinodiscus*, a hamburger-shaped diatom. Like all diatoms, it bears two frustules that fit together like the halves of a Petri Dish. The shells are perforated by pores. Here's a view from overhead:



Coscinodiscus radiatus.jpg

By Geographer - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

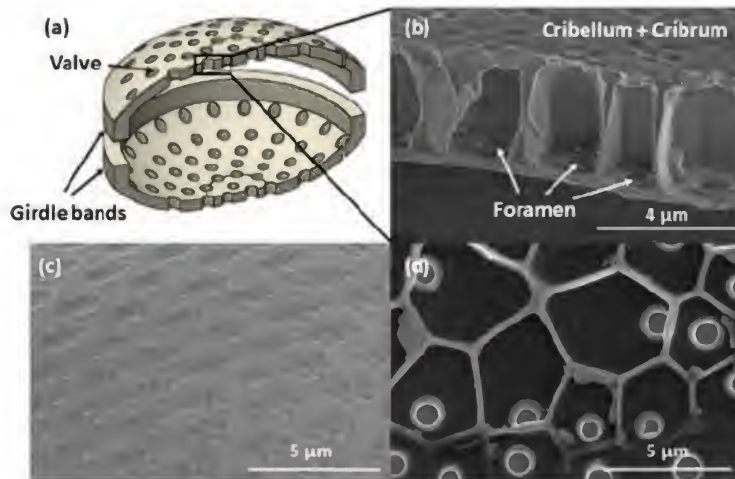
<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=43213425>

And here's a closer look at the microstructure:

(A) Schematic of shell (B) Cross-section of shell showing honeycombing and rimmed frustules (C) Outer surface of shell, showing hexagons of pores arranged in meta-hexagons (D) Inner layer of shell, showing one foramen per cell. Fig. 1 from Aitken et al. 2016.

Smaller elliptical pores pierce the exterior of the shell in groups of six, the groups themselves arranged in hexes. Lining the frustule interior are larger holes called foramina (sing. foramen) ringed with reinforced rims. In between the inner and outer walls lie honey-comb shaped cells with five or six side walls, each perforated by one foramen. All parts of the shell are made of smooth and apparently flawless amorphous silica – i.e., glass.

Diatom shells serve many purposes: portals for nutrients, buoyancy control, shaping water flow around the shell, and, of course, protection from predators and viruses. All of these forces compete to sculpt the

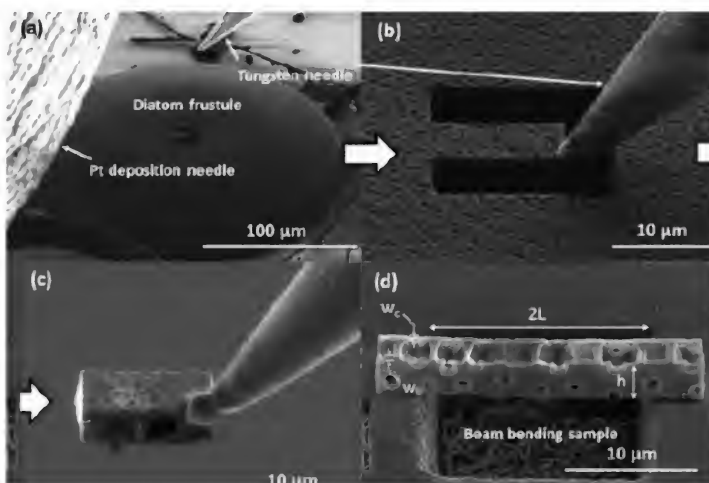


structure of the shell. Diatom shells grown in more predatory environments tend to be more fortified. On the other hand, a denser shell also may cause the diatom to sink to waters with too dark for photosynthesis and impair or prevent the exchange of gases, food, and waste that is as essential for diatoms as it is for us. Diatom shells have pores that may serve these purposes, but what has been unclear until now is to what extent those pores contribute to the strength of the shell, the need for exchange with the environment, or both. This team of scientists set out to test their influence –

along with the rest of the shell's structure -- on strength.

As you can imagine, conducting strength tests on structures measured in micrometers is a delicate business. Traditional mechanical testing methods cannot be used, and the tests conducted so far have given widely varying results. That's perhaps because scientists performed these tests on whole shells, with all their irregularities.

In this experiment, the scientists resolved some of the problems caused by testing slippery and bumpy shells by fabricating their own diatom beams – a feat almost as extraordinary to me as the discovery of the beam's strength. They used a focused ion beam inside a scanning electron microscope to cut a plank from a diatom frustule on three sides and then affixed a tungsten needle to the beam with a bead of platinum. Then they milled away the fourth side and then lifted it out of place with a tungsten needle. They could then deposit it where they wished. In the case of the three point bending experiment, that place was suspended over a well 20 x 20 x 40 micrometers in size. The finished beams look just like a roof or wall beam, but made of diatom, and very, very tiny.



How a diatom beam is born, and the well over which it was placed for strength testing. Fig. S4 (rearranged) from Aitken et al. 2016.

They then tested these beams with the same experiment one would use on a beam of concrete or steel – a three-point bending experiment. Here's one done at our scale:

By Rama - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.0 fr, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=863335>

In this experiment, the scientists tested their beam in a scanning electron microscope armed with a "nanoindenter", i.e., a tiny

probe.

Three-point bending experiment on beam from diatom frustule. The beam is turned so the inside of the shell is facing us. Fig. 3A from Aitken et al. 2016.

The nanoindenter pushed down on the beam with steadily increasing pressure. When the beam finally snapped, it launched itself into the air so quickly it exceeded the image scan rate of the SEM – so the break couldn't actually be seen. Most snapped samples simply vanished into the (relatively) cavernous

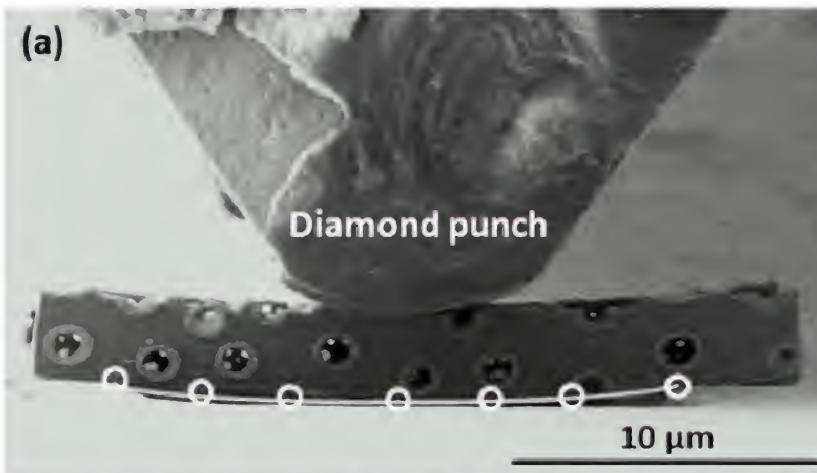


Trois-points-p1040189.jpg

space around them.

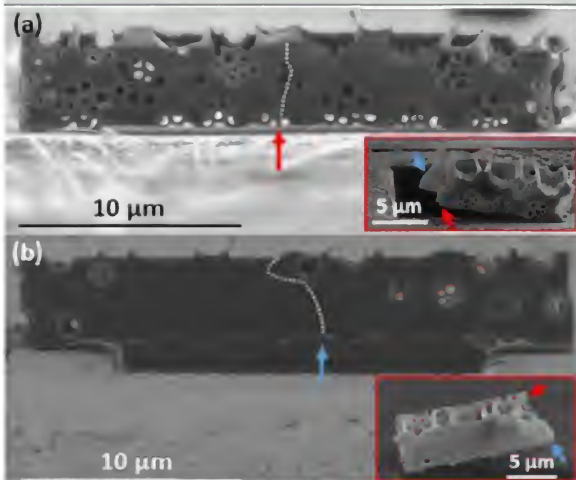
The scientists did manage to find one half of one cracked beam and take a picture of it under the SEM to see exactly how it broke and where. The pores in the outer surface of the diatom shell seemed to attract the fracture – or at least, not bar its path -- while the crack on the other side of the beam travelled conspicuously around a foramen.

(a) path of a crack shown on one side of a sample and (b) the path on the other side, extrapolated from the 1/2 beam that was recovered after fracture (insets, shown from two perspectives). Fig. 4 from Aitken et al. 2016.

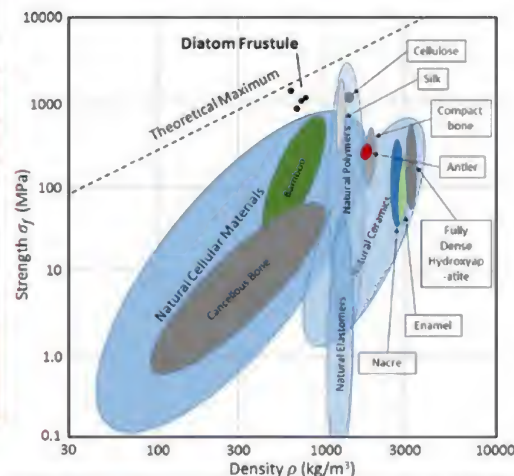


As a result, the authors thus suggest the foramens in the basal plate fortify the shell, while the pores in the outer surface serve to channel resources.

Based on measurements of the average failure stress and strain, and of the samples' density, the scientists were able to calculate the beams' specific strength, or strength-to-weight ratio. The value -- 1702 kNm/kg -- is "well above" the values for other natural materials including bamboo,



mollusk shell, and spider silk.



Strength-to-density ratios of natural materials. Fig. 5 from Aitken et al. 2016.

Diatom frustule is thus positioned in new real estate on

the biologic materials strength-to-weight chart, achieving strengths comparable to silk and other natural polymers, but at lower density. The scientists attributed this feat to their honeycombed interiors and the flawlessness of their silica – no flaws were detectable down to a resolution of two nanometers.

That's not to say no known substances exceed this specific strength – many do, but they are all man-made. Kevlar is one such substance, and another is high-purity silica nanowire, made, as implied, of pure silica. Diatom shells, by contrast, are actually composites of silica and an organic scaffolding used

to construct them. For example, *Coscinodiscus* seems to use long-chain polymers as to “floculate” (assemble) silica particles during shell fabrication.

These organic scaffolds seem to remain in place inside the shell walls after project completion. The cleaning procedure scientists used to remove the contents of the cell does not purge them, so they are likely chemically bound to the silica. Their staying power is testified to by the fact that such polymers have been recovered from the walls of diatoms extracted from Southern Ocean sediment cores nearly 8,000 years old.

Still, the bond between the scaffolding polymer and the silica has been hypothesized to consist of hydrogen bonds, which as every high school chemistry student knows, are weak relative to covalent bonds – the type that links the silica. So it is likely along the hydrogen-bond boundary between the silica and its organic scaffolding that diatom shells crack when placed under pressure – a “flaw” that silica nanowires lack.

Reference

Aitken, Zachary H., Shi Luo, Stephanie N. Reynolds, Christian Thaulow, and Julia R. Greer. "Microstructure provides insights into evolutionary design and resilience of *Coscinodiscus* sp. frustule." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113, no. 8 (2016): 2017-2022.

The views expressed are those of the author(s) and are not necessarily those of Scientific American.

0 Comments

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9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghan

gizmodo.com



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

The years between 1880 and 1920 changed American cities completely: From elevators to air conditioning to electricity, the monumental buildings born during this period seemed like living things, humming with life. But as quickly as they rose, many of them were torn down—victims of the same progress that pushed them up.

"After World War II," NPR once put it, "such buildings fell like leaves in autumn to make space for a new way of life." These buildings—many of which represented first-of-their-kind technical achievements just years before—were

woefully outdated for the post-War city, where telephones and open plan offices reigned. They had to go—and in an era before historic preservation even had a proper name, there were very few people fighting for them.

A recent *New York Times* article on demolition in the city—and all cities—called them "belles of the wrecking ball." We dug through the internet, from Skyscraper City to Flavorwire's own, to collection just a few below. But are there other stories of untimely architectural demise floating around out there? Let us know in the comments.

The Singer Building in New York



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

We have the Burj Khalifa, but in 1908, the world had the 612-foot-high Singer Building—built by the eponymous sewing machine conglomerate.

The tallest building in the world for a time, the downtown landmark was a victim of the great corporate migration towards midtown—in 1968, when modern tenants found themselves ill-served by its awkward, antiquated floor plan, it became the tallest building to ever be dismantled in NYC.

Sponsored

Garrick Theater in Chicago



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan had a brilliant, tumultuous relationship—and a portfolio of work that made Chicago a landmark of early modern architecture.

And the Garrick Theater—aka the Schiller Building—was the high-tech cherry on the top: The massive theater opened in 1892, a year before Chicago hosted the World's Fair.

But by the 1950s, a long decline had landed it on the list for razing. A young preservationist and photographer, Richard Nickel, documented its destruction and salvaged pieces of its facade and interior after the wrecking ball had swung in 1960 (one piece even fronts Second City's comedy theater).



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Images: The Richard Nickel Committee and Archive/Dwell.

Today, Nickel is hailed as a founding hero of historic preservation—and one of the only sources of documentation of Adler & Sullivan's demolished masterpieces. Tragically, he was killed while salvaging artifacts from another razed Sullivan building.

Advertisement

Birmingham Terminal Station in Birmingham, Alabama

Built at the end of the Victorian era, this railway station was like a temple to the train: Modeled after Istanbul's Hagia Sophia, its Byzantine spires raised eyebrows when it opened in 1909. Another victim of the decline of the railways, local advocates attempted to save it—but it was demolished in 1969.

Astor House in New York

Maybe it wasn't particularly beautiful, but the Astor House was one of those buildings that



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

practically *meant* New York to the rest of the country: Built by the self-made millionaire John Jacob Astor and the esteemed architect Isaiah Rogers, it opened in 1836 boasting everything from gas lighting—then a rarity—to indoor plumbing.

But like so many other great building of New York, only 70-odd years later, it had become relatives. Everything in the hotel was sold off, and the building was demolished.



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Images via DaytonInManhattan

But not before the *New York Tribune* printed a poetic farewell between the House and its neighbor, St. Paul's Cathedral:

Image via *The Bowery Boys*



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Shortly before the clock in the belfry of St. Paul's Church tolled out the hour of 12 last night the old edifice whispered softly to its neighbor across Vesey street:

"Goodby, Astor House! I shall miss you."

Crouching against the south flank of the towering Woolworth Building, the Astor House grimly awaited the end.

"Only a few minutes more, Astor House," St. Paul's said, as the gilt hands on the clock crept toward the summit of the dial. "We have stood together these many years through thick and thin, but sentiment has no place in the feet of Manhattan. The clock is about to strike. Goodby!"

Closes as St. Paul's Tolls 12.

9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

The Wabash Terminal in Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Described as "the most beautiful railroad building west of New York," by the *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and "the greatest Beaux-Arts skyscraper in the city" by others, the grand Wabash terminal only lasted from 1904 until 1954—it was partially destroyed after two fires made it virtually unusable.



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Penn Station in New York

Penn Station, of course, is the big one: The demolition that united concerned citizens and architects to create the movement that we, today, know as historic preservation.

preservation.

Unfortunately, New Yorkers couldn't stop the wrecking ball from coming down on the original station, a grand Beaux-Arts structure designed by McKim, Mead, and White in 1910, was torn down in 1963.

US Post Office in Boston

Built in 1885, the U.S. Post Office and Subtreasury was built by Alfred B. Mullett, a hero of the ornate Second Empire style, and was criticized by many Bostonians as overwrought.



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Above, Historic New England shows us what it looked like draped in mourning after President Grant's death, in 1885. But by 1912, its grandeur had diminished. It was razed in 1929:

Demolition Images: Boston Public Library on Flickr.

Chicago Federal Building in Chicago

Opened in 1905, this hulking Chicago building housed everything from Federal courts to the post office. But by 1965, it had lingered long past its useful life—and it, too, was razed.

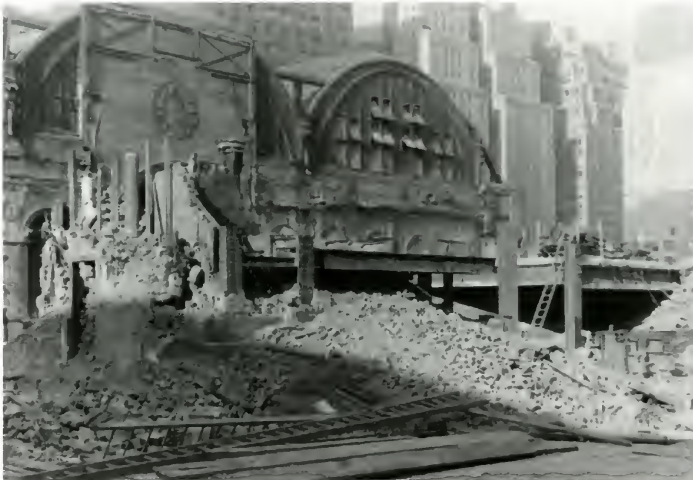


9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

City Hall Post Office in New York

Mullett's second contribution to this list is the City Hall Post Office, built in 1905 near City Hall in lower Manhattan. It, too, was widely hated by the public (some called it Mullett's Monstrosity), partially due to a construction accident that killed three workers earlier on. It did claim some cool bells and whistles though, like a pneumatic mail delivery system. Alas, nothing could repair its reputation with the public, and it was razed in 1939.

Lead image: The train shed of Chicago's Dearborn Station being torn down.



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Is there a building in your city or town that met an untimely end? Drop it in the comments below!

241 replies

- cool.beansKelsey Campbell-Dollaghan
2/19/14 9:43am



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

The monstrosity that replaced the Muncie Delaware County Courthouse links to a picture of a beach.

#corrections

(is the hashtag corrections thing still a thing?)

1

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• Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghancool.beans

2/19/14 9:44am

Here's the right one!

1

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• BKPhilKelsey Campbell-Dollaghan

2/18/14 10:21am



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down



9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Ah, but they were replaced with even more splendorific buildings.

This article really deserves a "then and now" feature. Here's my 5-minute effort:

Penn Station:

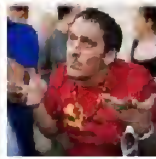
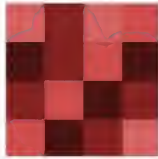


9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

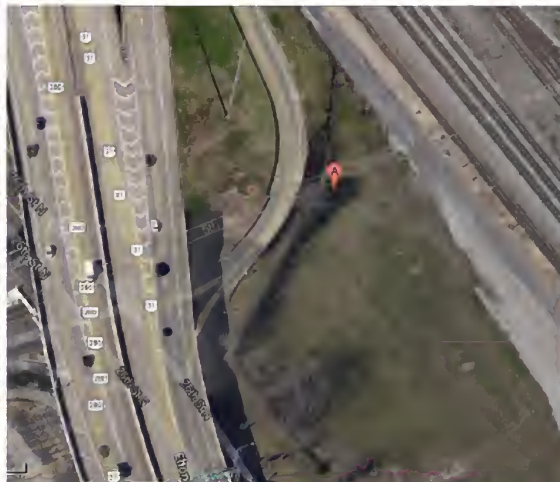


9 of the Most Beautiful Buildings We Ever Tore Down

Wabash
Pittsburgh
Terminal:



Birmingham Terminal Station:



Garrick Theater
(Schiller Theatre
Building):

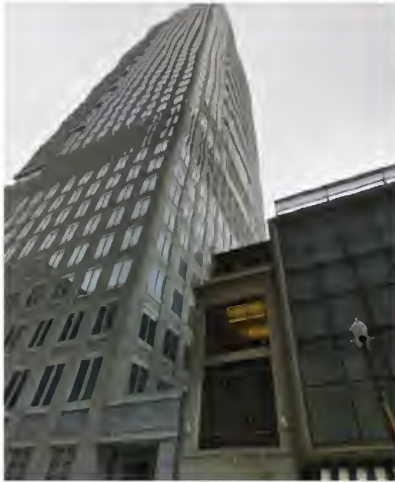
The Singer
Building:

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- Kelsey Campbell-DollaghanBKPhil
2/18/14 10:35am

Wow, thanks for posting these.



1

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this threadCollapse replies



captainvoorheesBKPhil
2/18/14 12:48pm

Here's an old pic of the Chicago Federal Building that I lifted from wiki:



here's another view of the H-shaped
building that's directly behind it:

The large building directly left and
behind the Chicago Federal Building
is the Chicago Board of trade. The
figure on the roof of the building is
Ceres, Roman Goddess of harvest.

1



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'Beautiful women' more likely to be possessed by evil demons, claim Islamic exorcists

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EXPRESS

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the Daily and
Sunday Express

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'Beautiful women' more likely to be possessed by evil demons, claim Islamic exorcists

BEAUTIFUL women who soak up the rays in their bikinis are more likely to get possessed by evil demons, according to shock claims from Islamic exorcists.

By Jon AustinJon Austin

PUBLISHED:20:15, Wed, Feb 17, 2016 | UPDATED: 21:18, Wed, Feb 17, 2016



IG • GETTY

Mallam Luthfi Jamal-Baba and Mallam Mohammad, exorcists based in Ghana, West Africa, say gorgeous women who wear revealing clothes are asking for trouble from supernatural body snatchers.

The pair claim the only way for lookers to stay safe from Satan's cronies is to wrap up as much as possible.

They said men could still be possessed by evil spirits, but it was more likely to be a woman, and beautiful ones were more

susceptible.

One of the pair, Mallam Mohammad, said bathing in water or the sun was also should not be done by girls hoping to keep the demons at bay.

He claimed the only surefire protection was "prayer, and not wearing revealing clothes or bathing".

Mr Mohammad believes caning possessed people is the quickest route to getting the evil spirit out.

He said: "The victims, at that moment, do not feel the pain.

"The jinns (evil spirits) are the ones who feel the pain and it is at this moment, together with the Quranic recitation, that they flee."

Fellow Imam and exorcist Mallam Luthfi Jamal-Baba, does not strike the alleged possessed person, but ties them down.

Some of the jinns are stubborn and when the victim is in a trance, they become violent and try to attack the exorcist during the exercise.

Exorcist Mallam Luthfi Jamal-Baba

He said: "Some of the jinns are stubborn and when the victim is in a trance, they become violent and try to attack the exorcist during the exercise.



GETTY • PIC POSED BY MODEL

"When it happens that way, the victims are tied with a rope and sometimes chained to chairs to keep them calm."

He reads verses from the Koran during 'exorcisms' and has helpers to hold victims down should they attack.

Both claim beautiful women possessed by jinns talk to themselves, harm themselves and can even kill others in extreme cases.

One man called Aminu said a younger sister talked to and cut from age 20.

He said: "She locked herself up in her room most of the time and we could hear her talk to herself as if she were with someone."



IG

She ended up being allegedly exorcised.

Nuworza Kugbey, a clinical psychologist at the Guidance and Counselling Placement Centre at the University of Ghana, said the symptoms described were more likely to be caused by mental health problems and psychotic episodes.

He said: "These are disorders that can be treated with both medication and

psychotherapy."

Belief in demonic possession is common in many countries, including Africa, Asia, and South American, but also within the Catholic Church.

23 Comments

18 hours ago

omendata

They repress women and then their sexual urges become inflamed even more its actually quite simple thats why ever Islamist is a potential rapist and a danger to women and we let them all into Europe - Merkel is the new Hitler!= a traitor to her own kind and people forget she was an East German Stasi officer in charge of propaganda and torture! Most people dont even know this in Germany! How sad for all!

18 hours ago

BWilliams

why are they so afraid of women?

18 hours ago

omendata

Because Islam is a backward 7th century death cult and it will never move on and has to be eradicated its the only solution but no one wants to face that inevitable fact!

2 days ago

Canadaexpat

These are from the religion that thinks it's "prophet " was not a pedophile for marrying a child!, idiots.

7 days ago

GilsonChapple

Girls...Just don't take a blind bit of notice of these freaks of Islamic subjugation. I can assure you that they are themselves the offspring of sewer rats.

7 days ago

RichardCarter

Demons. What a load of idiotic rubbish. No such things.

8 days ago

kawal solanki

its like ...we never seen god but we believe god exist. so evil might exist but the thought only stays in thug rowdy criminal and such kind ppl's mind, not in ours... so its totally goes on perception....

11 days ago

sunbird

These fools really dont belong in the 21st century.

9 days ago

Teddy Bear

Possesion is just as possible today as yesteryear. Males can also be possessed usually violent or by demon drink demons.

12 days ago

bustnbroke

It's really hard to believe there are such people walking on the same planet as the rest of us.

12 days ago

tabitha

They are the ones who are possessed by demons.

9 days ago

Teddy Bear

Many are.ISIS certainly are possessed by violent demons.

12 days ago

Tier Echelon

This theorem is a confinement and desolated condition, an isolated seclusion causative, of a lack with interaction with the 2016 modern earth, TiVo and Films in general anything illustrative.

12 days ago

fruitloop

The only supernatural body snatchers they need fear is you islamic wierdo's who can't keep it in your pants

12 days ago

Rick Hode

Primitive savages - what can you expect from such individuals.

12 days ago

Richard (Thailand)

Yes but these morons would give their eye teeth to get these beautiful women into bed. They wouldn't care about them being "possessed " then would they.

12 days ago

celtobrit

"The pair claim the only way for lookers to stay safe from Satan's cronies is to wrap up as much as possible."

Satan's cronies = Muslim males

12 days ago

jar11960

I can't post what I really think of these morons.

12 days ago

NigelFawkes

Mallam Luthfi Jamal-Baba and Mallam Mohammad, are a couple of uneducated, unqualified, self appointed louts who couldn't organise a search and rescue in a phone box.....these insecure goons couldn't get any in a woman's prison with a hand full of pardons.....anything said by trash like this means nothing....is nothing...just as they are.

12 days ago

Craigyllyn

Behold the Islamic mind.

12 days ago

legenda

It would fit well into medieval society.

12 days ago

eucitizen

so how do they account for the ugly unshaven unwashed IS members?

12 days ago

Professor Chaos

Ban the Burkha! Ban the Hijab!

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Bird poop apparently caused NY nuclear reactor outage

yahoo.com

Retrieved March 3rd, 2016 10:12pm PST USA

By MICHAEL VIRTANEN 8 hours ago

AP

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Bird poop was the likely cause of a December shutdown at a nuclear power plant outside New York City, according to the operator.

An Indian Point reactor safely shut down for three days starting Dec. 14 following an electrical disturbance on outdoor high voltage transmission lines, Entergy Corp. said. An outside expert is analyzing whether what's technically called bird "streaming" was the culprit.

Associated Press

In a report to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission last month, the New Orleans-based company said the automatic reactor shutdown was apparently from bird excrement that caused an electric arc between wires on a feeder line at a transmission tower.

"If it has nowhere to send its electricity, the generator senses that and automatically shuts down," Entergy spokesman Jerry Nappi said.

Plant managers told the NRC they were revising preventive maintenance for additional inspection and cleaning and installing bird guards on transmission towers.

Nappi said he couldn't recall a similar incident in the past several years from birds at Indian Point, which is located along the Hudson River north of New York City. He didn't immediately know what type of bird was suspected. No carcass was found, he said.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission spokesman Eliot Brenner said it's not uncommon for wildlife to trigger electrical outages on transmission lines regardless of the generation source of the electricity. "Squirrels are the biggest offenders," he said.

He didn't know if the NRC was specifically tracking animal-related reactor outages. "They're kind of few and far between, but certainly not unheard of," he said.

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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Is this the moment a woman was cured by priest after being possessed by a snake?

14:12, 3 Mar 2016 Updated 14:13, 3 Mar 2016 By Kara O'Neill

mirror.co.uk



This is the dramatic moment a priest performed a bizarre exorcism on a woman who was said to be 'possessed by a snake'

The exorcism took place in Kwekwe, Zimbabwe, at the Bethsaida Ministry Church.

Priest Teddy Bantu led the ritual, promising to rid the woman of her inner demon

after she confessed her terrifying experience to religious leaders.

He then begins the exorcism by shouting into a microphone while pushing his hand against the woman's head.



Newsflare

Distressed: The woman shrieks in pain before falling to the floor

Immediately, she begins to fall backwards, unsteady on her feet as the priest continues chanting at the snake to "get out" and "leave" the woman's body.

Eventually, the woman drops to the ground where she lies on her back as a member of the congregation covers her with a blanket.

Another man approaches the woman and sprays her face with a liquid as she shrieks and convulses, apparently in pain.

Possessed: The priest tells the snake to leave the woman's body

Priest Bantu finally shouts: "In the name of Jesus," before the room falls silent.

He then holds the microphone near the woman's mouth and asks her who she is.

When no answer comes, he concludes: "The spirit has gone, you are free."



It is thought the exorcism took place on February 21 during a Sunday morning church ceremony.

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Newsflare

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Strange Fruit

snopes.com

<http://www.snopes.com/photos/arts/strangefruit.asp>

Claim: Photograph shows a group of black dolls hung from a tree in a Baltimore neighborhood in order to intimidate protesters.



REAL PHOTOGRAPH; INACCURATE DESCRIPTION

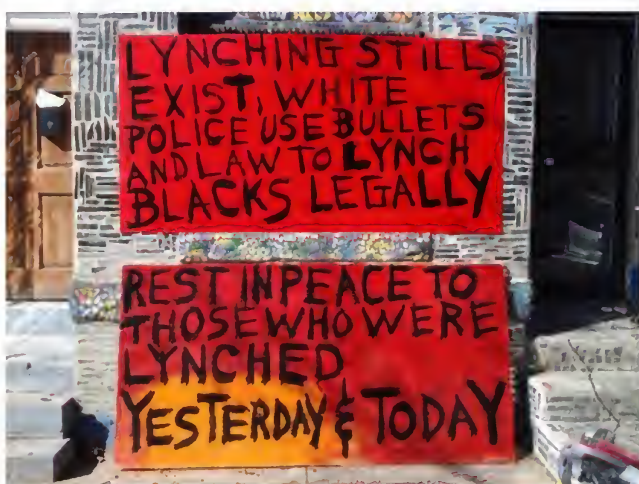
Example: *[Collected via Twitter, April 2015]*



Origins: In April 2015, a photograph purportedly showing a group of black dolls hanging from a tree in a predominantly white Baltimore neighborhood was passed around Twitter along with the claim that the display had been created by "white neighbors" in order to intimidate black citizens protesting the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody.

While the image is real, the story associated with it is inaccurate. The photograph actually shows an art installation created by Boston artist Loring Cornish:

Loring also posted a photograph of a sign he created to help explain the message behind his art:



It should also be noted that while Loring's display certainly speaks to many of the racial issues at the center of the Freddie Gray case, the Baltimore artist's installation was actually created a few days before Gray was arrested on 12 April 2015.

Last updated: 28 April 2015

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Odd Superstition of Life and Death

WINONA, MINN.—The bodies of Miss Frances Bloch and her brother Joseph are likely to repose forever undisturbed in their coffins in hillside graves, side by side, in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery here, with public curiosity satisfied.

After inspecting the body, Chief of Police H. C. Riebau announced that the story told by Thomas Bloch, sixty-nine, her father, a former member of the local police force, that he had not mutilated the bodies of his children, when he and a neighbor, Thomas Kobus, opened the graves was correct.

The action of the authorities was to determine the reliability of persistent rumors that Bloch had exhumed and decapitated the body of his daughter, in a superstitious belief that by so doing he could end a series of deaths which had taken away four of his sons.

Bloch said he was made almost frantic by the death of four sons since the death of his daughter five years ago, and by the illness of his fifth and only surviving son, Frank.

Driven to desperation, he said, he acted on the repeated suggestion of



friends, who told him that the spirit of the first to die in a family "calls" the spirits of the survivors and that only by beheading his daughter's body could he save Frank's life and eventually that of himself, his wife and four married daughters. He and Kobus, whom he hired for a few dollars, opened the grave of his daughter. Nothing remained of the girl's body, he declared, but the skeleton, and for this reason, he said, the grave was refilled without the body having been mutilated. They opened the grave of his son, Joseph, who died four years ago. Again, he declared only a skeleton was found. The next day Frank died.

Police Find Dead Not Decapitated on Opening Graves

Winona, Minn., Jan. 8.—Persistent rumors that the bodies of Miss Frances Bloch and her brother Joseph had been mutilated were set at rest Sunday by police, who examined the grave of the former in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery here. They found that her body had not been decapitated.

The action was taken to ascertain the reliability of the rumors which were to the effect that Thomas Bloch, 69, the father, and a neighbor, had exhumed and decapitated the body of his daughter in a superstitious belief that by so doing he could end a series of deaths which had taken four of his sons and threatened a fifth.

The grave of Joseph was not examined.

POLICE PROBE REPORT GRAVE IS OPENED, BODY DECAPITATED

Winona, Minn., Jan. 6—Police today withheld a decision as to whether they would open the grave of Miss Francis Bloch, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bloch, of this city, to ascertain if the body had been decapitated in a superstitious belief that such action would end a long series of deaths in the family following confession by Thomas Bloch admitting that he had opened the grave but denied he had molested the body. Bloch's statement came following the announced intention of the authorities last night that they would exhume the body as a result of a disclosure that the grave of the girl and one of her brothers had been tampered with during the last 10 days. Bloch is reported to have told the police that his object in opening the grave was to confirm certain

"signs." When he opened the grave, he said, with the assistance of a neighbor, he found the bodies decomposed, nothing remaining but the bare skeleton.

Bloch denied that his intention was to cut the head from the body of his daughter and place it at the feet in the coffin because of a superstition that the spirit of the daughter had been responsible for the death of five of her brothers since her own death slightly over five years ago, police said.

Frank, the last of the Bloch sons, died last Saturday. It was said to be in connection with the illness of Frank Bloch that a visit was made to the grave of Frances in an effort to conciliate her spirit and save Frank's life.

This man proves he's stronger than TWO horses

14:32, 4 Mar 2016 Updated 14:32, 4 Mar 2016 By Kara O'Neill

mirror.co.uk

World's most bizarre strongman event? Incredible bodybuilder takes on two horses in pulling contest



A bodybuilding 'strongman' has become the 'mane' attraction in Russia after an astonishing stunt where he proved to have more pulling power than two horses.

Elbrus, 41, looped his arms through two lengths of rope and then took the strain while the horses pulled in opposite directions during the performance in Chelyabinsk

in central Russia.

Incredibly, the man managed to overpower the huge animals, pulling them both towards him at the same time.

He explained: "This is a very dangerous stunt, before the trick a performer needs to stretch his muscles in a right way."



Strong man: The bodybuilder takes on the weight of two horses

Being pulled literally to pieces by wild horses was a common death penalty in medieval Europe.

Elbrus added: "The slightest mistake could cost a lot.

"I know that Russian strongmen used to do stunts like this more than hundred years ago, but I am the only one who can do it today.

"I've been preparing and training my body for four months to reach this stage."

Success: The man managed to overpower the two huge animals

Elbrus - a well-known strongman in Russia - has become a sensation on Russian social



CEN

media for his latest stunt.

He was runner-up in the World's Strongest Man contest in 2005 and caused a sensation when he powerlifted a live camel in one stunt, infuriating animal rights campaigners.

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Scientists have found a mysterious boiling river straight out of Amazonian legend

sciencealert.com



Scientists have found a mysterious boiling river straight out of Amazonian legend

Truth really is stranger than fiction.

FIONA MACDONALD
18 FEB 2016

For centuries, Peruvian locals have talked about a river in the Amazon that burns so hot it can kill. According to legend, Spanish conquistadors foolishly ventured into the rainforest in search of gold, and the few men that returned told stories of poisoned water, man-eating snakes, and a river that boiled from below.

For Peruvian geoscientist, Andrés Ruzo, the myth had fascinated him since childhood. But it wasn't until he was completing his PhD project on geothermal energy potential in Peru that he began to question whether the river could actually be real.

According to the experts he spoke to, the answer was a unanimous "no" - after all, hot rivers do exist, but they're generally associated with volcanoes, and there are no volcanoes in that part of the country.

But when Ruzo went home over the holidays and asked his family where the myth had come from, his mother told him that the river didn't just exist, she and his aunt had actually swum in it before.

It sounded pretty ridiculous, but in 2011, Ruzo took a chance and hiked into the Amazon rainforest with his aunt, and saw the famed river with his own eyes.

Much to his disbelief, it was steaming hot. "When I saw this, I immediately grabbed for my thermometer," said Ruzo in a TED talk back in 2014. "The average temperature in the river

was 86 degrees Celsius, not quite boiling but definitely close enough ... It's not a legend."

The most puzzling part was the sheer size of it. Hot springs aren't uncommon, and thermal pools get to these temperatures in other parts of the world, but nothing even comes close to the scope of the river - it's up to 25 metres wide and six metres deep, and runs burning hot for an incredible 6.24 km.

Add that to the fact that the river is 700 km from the closest volcanic system, and the temperature just didn't make any sense. In fact, it's the only river of its kind anywhere in the world.

With the permission of the Shaman, Ruzo has spent the past five years studying the river, its surrounding ecosystem, and its water in the lab, in the hopes of figuring out what's going on.



Devlin Gandy

To be clear, Ruzo obviously wasn't the first to discover the river, and as suggested by its indigenous name - Shanay-timpishka, which means "boiled with the heat of the Sun" - he also wasn't the first to wonder what made it so hot.

But his research - backed in part by a *National Geographic* Young Explorers grant - is finally revealing some of its secrets. It turns out, it's not the Sun that boils the water, but fault-fed hot springs.

Imagine Earth like a human body, with fault lines and cracks running through it like arteries. These 'Earth arteries' are filled with hot water, and when they come to the surface, we see geothermal manifestations - like the boiling river.

Chemical analysis has revealed that the water in the river originally fell as rain. Ruzo now hypothesises that this happens far upstream - perhaps as far away as in the Andes - and along its journey seeps down into the ground, where it's heated up by Earth's geothermal energy. It eventually emerges in the Amazon, at the boiling river.

This means the system is part of an enormous hydrothermal system, the likes of which haven't been seen anywhere else on the planet.

Even more exciting, Ruzo has worked with biologists Spencer Wells and Jonathan Eisen to sequence the genomes of the microbes living in and around the river, and discovered brand new species that are able to survive the heat.

Of course, as fascinating as the river is, it can also be deadly. The water gets so hot that Ruzo has regularly seen animals fall in and slowly start boil to death. "The first thing to go are

the eyes," he explained in his TED talk.

Eventually, the animals can no longer swim, and water fills their mouths and lungs, causing them to be cooked from the inside out. Gruesome.

Still, people do actually swim in the river, as his mother claimed, but only after heavy rainfalls when it's diluted with cold water. More often, the water is used to make tea and for cooking.

Ruzo will now continue to study the river and its source. But his main focus now is how to protect the river and its surrounding land - while his results are ready for publication, he's refusing to release many of them until the Peruvian government will guarantee they'll put appropriate conservation measures in place.

"In the middle of my PhD, I realised, this river is a natural wonder," Ruzo told Maddie Stone over at Gizmodo. "And it's not going to be around unless we do something about it."

He's just released a book called *The Boiling River* on his adventures, and is hoping that by spreading the news about the unique system, people might take on the cause themselves and decide that the site significant enough to save from loggers and developers.

"I don't like the concept of one person leading this charge - I think it's about building a community on an international scale," said Ruzo. "The planet's gotten small, and natural wonders like this are few and far between."

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Bones found at prison may belong to real-life Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Steven Morris

Friday 19 February 2016 Last modified on Friday 19 February 2016

theguardian.com

Thomas Hardy

Archaeologists' discovery could be remains of Martha Brown, whose public hanging in 1856 was watched by Thomas Hardy



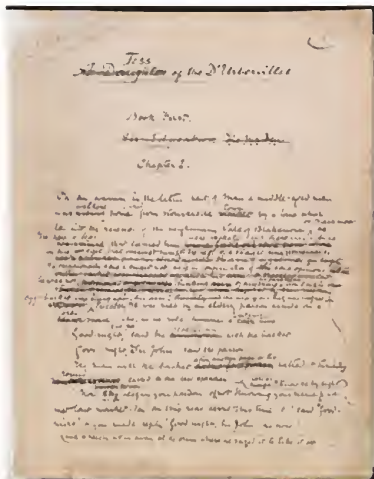
Gemma Arterton (right) in the 2008 BBC adaptation of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Photograph: BBC/Nick Briggs/BBC Thomas Hardy's manuscript for *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Photograph: 12174/The British Library Martha Brown was executed at Dorchester prison in 1856, watched by a young Thomas Hardy. Photograph: Rex/Shutterstock

Archaeologists may have unearthed the remains of a woman whose execution had a lasting impact on the writer Thomas Hardy, inspiring the fate of one of his most beloved creations – Tess of the d'Urbervilles.

Excavators found the bones at Dorchester prison in Dorset, where a 16-year-old Hardy watched the public hanging of Martha Brown after she was convicted of murdering her violent husband.

Remains including a skull were uncovered at the prison – which closed in 2013 – ahead of the building of a housing development. The discovery has caused huge excitement among Hardy

enthusiasts, who believe the bones may be those of Brown, whose hanging inspired Tess's unpleasant end.



Thomas Hardy's manuscript for *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Photograph: 12174/The British Library Martha Brown was executed at Dorchester prison in 1856, watched by a young Thomas Hardy. Photograph: Rex/Shutterstock

They are calling for work to be carried out to confirm who the remains belong to, and for them to be given a proper burial before work to build 190 homes and commercial units begins on the site.

Nick Gilbey, a Dorset-based film-maker and Hardy fan, said: "I don't think it would be too difficult to establish if any of the remains are those of a woman. If they are, they are almost certain to be the remains of Martha."

He said a full examination of the prison site should take place. "I think more work needs to be done, and we need to make sure that whatever remains are found there are given a proper, decent burial. Martha is an important historical figure because of the Hardy connection."

Hardy was among a crowd of up to 4,000 people who watched Brown's hanging in August 1856. It was an event that had a huge impact on his life and work. Seventy years later, he wrote to a

friend, Lady Hester Pinney, expressing his shame at being present, adding: "My only excuse being that I was but a youth, and had to be in the town at that time for other reasons."

Still, he could not resist describing the hanging in vivid detail: "I remember what a fine figure she showed against the sky as she hung in the misty rain, and how the tight black silk gown set off her shape as she wheeled half-round and back."

Tess of the d'Urbervilles was published in 1891. There are superficial similarities between Tess and Brown: both women were executed for murdering men who had wronged them in some way. In Tess's case, she stabs Alec d'Urberville, the architect of her downfall. Brown was found guilty of killing her husband with an axe, though she always claimed she was innocent.



Thomas Hardy's manuscript for *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Photograph: 12174/The British Library
Martha Brown was executed at Dorchester prison in 1856, watched by a young Thomas Hardy. Photograph: Rex/Shutterstock

In his novel, Hardy does not describe Tess's death in detail. Instead, he tells how two onlookers watch the cornice of a tower as a tall staff is fixed to it. "A few minutes after the hour had struck something moved slowly up the staff, and extended itself upon the breeze. It was a black flag. 'Justice' was done."

In handwritten notes of her conversations with Hardy, Lady Pinney describes how he talked of Martha and Tess. "His sympathy for these unhappy women was wonderful," she wrote.

Developer City & Country has made a planning application for the prison site. As part of the scheme, the company commissioned an archaeological survey. In their report, the archaeologists say the remains were found outside consecrated ground, adding: "It is known that executed prisoners convicted of murder were buried outside of consecrated ground from the 1830s and it cannot be ruled out that this may be associated with such execution."

"It is the intention that any human remains which may be disturbed by the proposal development will be adequately recorded and removed prior to disturbance, with the intention to rebury the remains following appropriate assessment and analysis."

Mike Nixon, the secretary of the Thomas Hardy Society, said more work should be done on the site before it was developed; "Hardy is well known for storing up experiences and using them decades later. When he wrote *Tess*, I'm sure he had in mind Martha Brown. We believe the remains should be respected, whoever they belong to, but it would be neat if they were shown to be those of Martha."

A spokesperson for Cotswold Archaeology, which carried out the survey, said: "At this stage, it is not possible to determine whether the remains are male or female, as the remains have not been removed for recording or analysis."

Legend of Bonnie Prince Charlie granddaughter's exile

scotsman.com



Shân Ross

09:30 Sunday 21 February 2016

THEY called her “the Lady of the Heather”, and she was rumoured to be the illegitimate granddaughter of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

If she was, she could hardly have come further from Scotland. For the place she called home was at the very edge of civilisation, if not over it: the now uninhabited Campbell Island, 450 miles

south of New Zealand.

Now a team of historians and archaeologists from Heritage New Zealand is to investigate the story of the woman who is said to have lived in the island's Camp Cove in the early 19th century and who always wore a sprig of heather on her hat.

Legend has it she was a contender for the throne, alarming her rivals, and she was brought to the island by a Captain William Stuart, a privateer in the Caribbean, who had boasted of drinking burgundy with the exiled prince.

The tale has inspired books, novels and a ballad, and the New Zealand expedition may be seen as an attempt to sort out fact from fantasy.

The island was first inhabited in 1810. It was a sealing base until the seals were virtually wiped out by the middle of the decade, although the trade revived briefly in the 1820s. Whaling brought more settlers there in the 1830s and 1840s, and in 1874 the island was visited by a French scientific expedition intending to view the transit of Venus.

Whether fact or fiction, “the Lady of the Heather” – which is also the story of a romantic novel by William Lawson dates from the early 19th century.

In Lawson's novel, the heroine is exiled to Campbell island because of suspected treachery to the Jacobite cause. But the story may have some factual base – possibly in that some of the early ships visiting the island did indeed have women on board, and women may have been among the first settlers.

The Heritage New Zealand investigative team will be investigating the flattened remains of a sod hut where such a settler might have lived. These huts, made from grass with densely packed roots holding the soil together, were favoured by settlers when there was no timber or brick.

Norm Judd, a historian who will be with the team visiting the island wrote in his blog: "It appears that the seed from which the Lady of the Heather myth was grown by an article for the Dominion in 1891 by a journalist Roderick Carrick.

"What interests me is that Carrick saw a market for the legend in 1891; that the hut's story reflected the way New Zealanders saw the mystique of the sub-Antarctic islands. The people who perpetuate Carrick's myth today do so, I believe, as a way of connecting the islands through stories handed down."

Nick Hirst, of the department of conservation in Auckland, said that the team will visit Campbell Island at end end or next month or in early April.

"The timing of their arrival depends on the weather and how long the voyage takes.

"They will clear vegetation from the remains of the sod hut. The site from sea lions and it will be examined to see what it reveals."

The island, uninhabited since a meteorological station was automated in 1995, is a Unesco World Heritage site.

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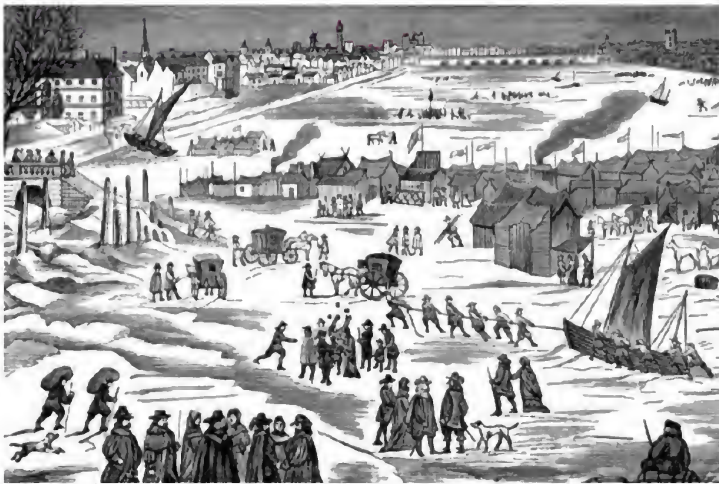
6 of the most catastrophic weather events in British history

Wednesday 3rd June 2015

historyextra.com



The famously changeable British weather has long been the subject of complaint and small talk. Here, Patrick Nobbs explores six of the most disastrous weather events in British history



Frost fair on the River Thames in London, 1683, during the 'Little Ice Age'. (Ann Ronan Pictures/Print Collector/Getty Images)

The world's leading climatologists all agree that our weather is becoming more severe in the current period of rapid climatic change. Yet our history, if we care to learn from it, has seen this all before. As the Northern Hemisphere descended into the coldest climatic phase since the last ice age – 'The Little Ice Age' – Britain's weather became highly erratic, and sometimes truly deadly....

1) 'De Grote Mandrenke', 1362

On 16 January 1362, a storm of extraordinary violence wrecked many important buildings including Salisbury and Winchester cathedrals, and tore down hundreds of thousands of trees. Extremely low pressure at the heart of the storm created a devastating storm surge that raced inland along England's eastern coastline like a tsunami.

The sea completely destroyed a major fishing port – Ravenser Odd in Holderness, Yorkshire – and so badly damaged the port of Dunwich in East Anglia that it was largely abandoned soon after. Shipping vessels of every size were sunk or driven ashore and, as the storm moved east, it obliterated parts of the Dutch coast, rupturing sea defences and even creating a permanent inland sea – de Zuider Zee.

An entire island called Strand was engulfed and washed away, as were hundreds of coastal communities, including the prosperous German port city of Rungholt [or Rungholt]. In Denmark, hundreds of parishes were lost, and for years afterwards fields and fenland were polluted by salt.

Chroniclers of the time estimated that in excess of 100,000 lives were lost, although some modern evaluations put this figure somewhat lower. Nevertheless, climatologist Hubert Lamb estimated that this storm, combined with other contemporary gales, took 306,000 lives in Europe. This episode, combined with losses of 30–50 per cent of Britain's population from the recent Black Death epidemics, saw the cost of labour rise dramatically. This presented the feudal structure of the era in England with its first major challenge.

2) Europe's bitterly cold winter, 1407–8

The 1430s was a decade estimated to be as cold as the 1690s – Britain's coldest instrumentally measured decade – with six of its 10 winters rated 'severe'. Yet one, slightly earlier winter stands alone, head and shoulders above all others about which we know. This is the 15-week deep-freeze of 1407–8.

Early December 1407 saw a severe frost set in across much of Europe that lasted until late March. In England, trees split, birds were frozen to death in flight, and avian populations were decimated. The Thames was frozen over for the best part of three months, and it was "possible to walk dry shod across the entire river throughout the season".

While water-bearing traffic was frozen at anchor, other forms of travel and commerce became impossible due to hard packed ice and deep snow. Far to the south, the Bosphorus froze in its entirety at Constantinople, and the lower Danube froze over completely – the only known occurrence.

Most major European rivers froze, and the Baltic Sea was unnavigable. Icebergs surged down from Iceland, clogging the North Sea and the English Channel, and it was possible to ride a horse from Denmark all the way to Norway across the deep-frozen North Sea.

In France and Italy olive trees, vines and great swathes of fruit trees were killed, and many French watermills were reported crushed by ice flows that had gathered on the rivers. This is widely accepted as the longest and possibly most severe winter of the last millennium.

Within 50 years, the start of a major climatic downturn saw the widespread abandonment of previously thriving settlements across Britain's highlands – the remains of some of which can still be found today.

3) The Great Tudor Drought, 1540–41

After 1550, Britain and Europe's climate cooled significantly – a fact illustrated most vividly by the continuous growth of Europe's glaciers until the 19th century. Immediately prior to this, however, Britain and most of Europe suffered a cataclysmic two-year drought.

From February 1540 rainfall pretty much ceased; March was exceptionally warm, and April and May were hot and dry. The spring saw wells, aquifers, streams and rivers all start to dry out – between February and September, rain fell only six times in London.

Freshwater from the Thames shrank to such an unprecedented extent that seawater flowed on the tide past London Bridge, polluting the water supply. The resulting dysentery and cholera killed thousands.

On the continent, Switzerland and France saw grapes wither by July; harvests were lost, fruit died and rotted on trees that shed their leaves, and rivers and streams vanished. One Alsace farmer reported it was possible "for a man dangle his legs in the great fissures" that formed on empty riverbeds.

In Rome, not a drop of rain fell for nine months; the Rhine dried up in places, and the Seine in

Paris ran dry. Unlike many of England's drought summers, rain did not return to save the day in autumn 1540. Weak winter rains failed to replenish Europe's thirsting water supplies, and the crisis deepened.

Winter remained unusually warm; in Bavaria in November people were still swimming in mountain lakes to keep cool. A second hot dry spring evolved into a second blistering summer in 1541. It was so hot in Britain that some forests began to die from drought.

Despair grew to desperation; parts of Europe suffered virtual desertification by July 1541. The River Trent, described in spring as a 'runnel', or brook, soon ran totally dry. Disease and hunger cast a great shadow over Britain, like that of a plague. Parishes across the country prayed for rains that did not come.

Livestock now died in huge numbers, with even the deepest wells now dry for months, and hay and feed impossible to find. Only in October 1541 did the weather finally relent. The following year the pendulum swung completely the other way, and 1542 was a year of widespread flooding across Britain.



Illustration from Shepherd's Calendar, 1597, depicting farmers with their livestock. Taken from A Short History of the English People, by John Richard Green, illustrated edition, Volume II, Macmillan and Co, London, New York, 1893. (Photo by The Print Collector/Print Collector/Getty Images)

4) The Lewes Avalanche, 1836

A severe cold spell began on 23 December 1836, and on Christmas Eve a gale force easterly wind ushered in one of the greatest snowstorms of the 19th century, with drifting snow 10–40 ft deep in places. The *London Globe* reported by New Year that “not in the greatest memory of the oldest citizens has there ever been such a stopping up of the mails (mail coaches) for so many days in London which is now of the gravest concern in the minds of all commercial men”.

In the Sussex town of Lewes, immense drifts had piled up upon the chalk cliffs above the town, which the strong winds sculpted into a long cornice weighing hundreds of tons. After the blizzard it loomed over a row of small cottages below. In Britain, snowfall usually melts in heavy rain or bright sunshine when warmer air arrives. However, this feature was too heavy to melt away, and had inevitably to fall.

By 27 December, walkers on the downs saw great cracks appearing in the snow and, as the temperature crept above freezing, the cracks widened. One young man ran along the yard alongside the houses below, imploring the occupants to evacuate. All were mothers and young children reluctant to leave with nowhere to go.

Fearing the worst, the young man fled and no sooner had he left, the great cornice fell. It produced a major avalanche; snow ploughed down, bursting underneath the houses, tossing them bodily upwards, before further snow pushed over them from above. This crushed every building and buried their occupants in what eyewitnesses described as a "mound of pure white".

All afternoon rescuers desperately fought to free a total of 15 women and children buried in the rubble. Sadly eight of them were dead, including one woman and all of her four children. There is no other known record of an avalanche that has taken place in lowland Britain.

5) The Great Tempest of 1703

In 1702, Britain and its allies declared war on France in protest at the expansionist ambitions of Louis XIV of France and his grandson Philip V of Spain. However, at the height what became known as the War of the Spanish Succession, Britain's powerful navy was decimated by a completely unexpected foe.

On 26 November 1703, the greatest storm ever to strike the British Isles swept in. Winds were so powerful that approaching gusts "sounded like deep, booming thunder, striking terror into the hearts of all who heard them".

The force of the wind smashed into buildings like bulldozers, and chimneys, roofs and walls were blown down, killing and injuring householders throughout southern Britain. Thousands of buildings, meanwhile, crumbled away or collapsed. Millions of trees came down, and lightning, torrential rain and tornadoes created terror on both land and sea.



c1698, engraving of the first lighthouse to be built on the notorious Eddystone reef, 14 miles off the coast of Plymouth, Devon. The lighthouse was destroyed by a storm on the night of 26 November 1703. (Photo by SSPL/Getty Images)

A great storm surge swept up the Severn estuary, with water pushing miles inland. This resulted in great loss of property, livestock and human life: the bishop of Bath and Wells and his wife were both killed in their beds by a falling chimney.

Meanwhile at sea, the Downs area of the Kent coastline was sheltering several key naval and commercial ships in connection with the war. As the furious winds bore down, a vast swell drove everything in its path onto the Goodwin Sands. Up to 1,200 officers and crew lost their lives here, while one vessel was dragged hundreds of miles out into the North Sea, all the way to Gothenburg.

Journalist and author Daniel Defoe described the events as such that “no pen could describe it, nor tongue express it, nor thought conceive it unless by one in the extremity of it”.

The next days bore out scenes of widespread and general devastation. The dockyard at London Pool woke to several naval vessels crushed together in to “a single great pile,” while at Chatham the HMS Vanguard was lost with all hands. On the Goodwin Sands, losses included several great Man of War vessels including the HMS *Northumberland*, HMS *Restoration* and the HMS *Mary Stirling*.

The navy lost some 1,500 officers and men in total – a third of its overall force at the time. What’s more, it is estimated that as many as 15,000 deaths resulted from this storm alone, most at sea. Even the queen was forced to spend the night with her staff sheltering in a wine cellar. Seeing the devastation first-hand and hearing of the severity of naval losses, early on she pledged a fund to support the families of those who had lost any man at sea, killed in service of the crown.

6) The Climate Crisis, 1815–17

On the evening of 5 April 1815, British forces thought that they heard loud bursts of cannon fire nearing their fort at Jakarta in Indonesia. In actual fact, the noise was the start of the most violent volcanic eruption in recorded history, from Mt Tambora on the island of Sumbawa, some 1,200km away.

More than 4,300m (14,100ft) high, on 10 April it finally exploded so violently that ash shot 45km into the troposphere, reducing the mountain’s height by 1,500m. As many as 60,000 died from the eruption; many died later on from starvation and disease.

The ash cloud spread across the globe carrying 160km² of volcanic material, weighing 140 billion tonnes. The material dramatically weakened the amount of solar radiation that the earth received, while also reflecting further sunlight back out into space.

By June a reddish haze or fog was visible in much of the northern hemisphere. Vivid sunsets with dramatic glowing colours were observed as the dust refracted the light of the sun and temperatures in dropped progressively. Atmospheric conditions began to abandon their usual patterns, and spring and summer 1815 were dominated by cold, wet conditions.

Napoleon’s forces at Waterloo fell foul of weeks of rain, when the heavy cannons his troops had used so effectively before were rendered useless as they sank deep into the flooded earth.

Napoleon’s retreat from the battle of Waterloo. Original artwork after a painting by Steuben. (Photo by Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

By 1816, after months of global cooling, the coldest instrumentally recorded year in Britain began. The summer months were the coldest ever measured, and were relentlessly wet. In North America winter frosts persisted through spring, and snow blanketed New England on 6–7 June while Quebec was buried by more than a foot of snow.



Failed crops from 1815 meant a winter of hunger, reduced animal feed and a shrunk seed base for farmers. This spelled disaster in 1816: in many countries, famine and disease spread quickly. In France, wealthy English tourists saw what they thought were armies marching south in the summer of 1816; in fact these were starving rural poor on the move, looking for any possible means of survival in the towns.

Britain saw bread riots in many places, and some commentators expressed fears of a replica of the 1789 French Revolution in England. Lord Byron's socialite party were trapped indoors on holiday at a Swiss lake by endless rain, thunder, lightning and autumnal temperatures. Here, Mary Shelley dreamt up the story of *Frankenstein*. Jane Austen, meanwhile, described the summer of 1816 as one in which "the gloom, darkness and rain was an extraordinary and dismal affair creating a boredom that was hard to countenance".

Switzerland suffered more than almost anywhere in Europe that year, as crops were devastated by months of rain. In most European countries, the cost of every basic foodstuff rose out of the reach of the poor, and even the rich saw their household bills increase dramatically. Sulfur dioxide spread right across the planet, with the highest concentrations of sulfates measured in the Greenland ice cores for 2,000 years. By 1818, however, levels of sulfates were back to normal, and that year saw a warmer-than-average summer.

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Camera angle behind mystery eel of Swansea

By TIM CONNELL Feb. 16, 2016, 10:02 a.m.

theherald.com.au

Retrieved Feb 16, 2016 7:01pm PST USA

Wednesday February 17, 2016

Creature at Swansea went viral, but not all was as it seemed.



MYSTERY SOLVED: A pike eel photographed near the Swansea boat ramp sent ripples through social media. Picture: Robert Tyndall.

GIANT eel, "messed up crocodile" or mystery lake monster?

According to the man who photographed it and triggered a tidal wave of online curiosity: none of the above.

Robert Tyndall's photo of a mysterious creature he found near the Swansea boat ramp confused and slightly unnerved locals when it washed up on social media on Monday.

Ethan Tippa, who shared it on Facebook, typified the general response.

"What the f--- is it?"

The answer, experts soon confirmed, was that it was a pike eel.

What was far from obvious from the photo, and what a bemused Mr Tyndall later revealed, was that the eel measured "about 1.4 metres".

"I knew it was some kind of eel and it's a big eel, but it definitely looks bigger," Mr Tyndall, who found the eel while fishing last weekend, said.

"I think everyone enjoys using their imagination. Judging by the comments, it was growing by the minute."

Mr Tyndall, of Caves Beach, said he was amused by speculation his image was Photoshopped, because he doesn't "know anything about computers".

To many, the angle made the eel seem longer than the species' average maximum of 1.8 metres.

The nocturnal pike eel is common but surprisingly little is known about it.

Marine biologist Julian Pepperell said the species is frequently caught by fishers at night who get "the fright of their lives" when they reel in a powerful, thrashing predator with a nasty bite.

"There are certainly people who are bitten by them in boats," Dr Pepperell said.

"They have incredibly strong muscle and their teeth are geared towards inflicting slashing wounds."

An old fishers' adage goes that a tinnie has room for a fisherman or a pike eel, but not both.

The photo of the long, sharp-toothed and clearly dead creature has been shared thousands of times on social media, with many identifying it as the similar but flatter-bodied largehead hairtail.

The eel at Swansea was probably "relatively old", Dr Pepperell said, and could have died from a net entanglement, been hit by a boat or died of old age.

A Department of Primary Industries spokesman also said it appeared to be a mature specimen.

"Judging by the size it is believed that the eel was mature and may have died from natural causes," the spokesman said.

Pike eels are not poisonous to eat, and are frequently sold in the markets of Southeast Asia.

They have been known to hunt 100 metres beneath the ocean's surface for fish and crustaceans, and are more common off NSW than anywhere else in Australia.

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Cat o' Nine Tales

snopes.com

<http://www.snopes.com/horrors/mayhem/blackcat.asp>
updated From the archive

Legend: Black cats are routinely sacrificed by "satanic cults" at Halloween.

Example: [Baker, 1999]

Black cats, beware.

Long associated with witches, bad luck and the dark side, black felines are often used for pranks, party props and even satanic, sacrificial rituals around Halloween.

"This is a time when blood rituals take place," said Hedy Litke, director of animal placement at the ASPCA. "Black cats are often sacrificed." Such is their popularity that many shelters in New York and around the country ban adoptions of black cats in the weeks and days preceding Oct. 31 to protect them from potentially grisly endings.



Origins: Halloween is a festival many of our pets could do without. Our dogs and cats don't appreciate the symbolism and revelry of All Hallow's Eve; to most of them the evening is a frightening collage of trick-or-treaters and party-goers who noisily shuffle from house to house, pound on doors, and engage in a variety of mischief. Even worse, pets who remain outside on Halloween are subject to becoming the targets of pranks ranging from the comic to the cruel.

Unfortunately, Halloween has also been a time when some people acquire pets — particularly cats — to use as living decorations or for displays of fun and sport, only to discard or abandon them afterwards (as often happens with chicks and rabbits at Easter time). Accordingly, many animal shelters have taken steps in recent years to limit or eliminate the adoption of cats in the days leading up to Halloween by either deferring feline adoptions until after Halloween or by more carefully scrutinizing the prospective adopters.

One of the more widely-cited justifications for the implementation of more stringent adoption policies by animal shelters around Halloween is the claim that cats in general — and black cats in particular — are avidly sought by members of "satanic cults" who engage in the mutilation, torture, and killing of cats in celebrations associated or coincident with Halloween. That animal shelter policy has been influenced by a widespread belief in satanic cat-sacrificing rituals at Halloween is beyond dispute; the issue here is whether such activity is really as prevalent as the belief in it is.

First of all, depending upon which source you believe, the alleged practice of sacrificing black

cats began with "Druid priests," "pagans," or the (Christian) "Church":

More than 2,000 years ago, in the area we know now as Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, Druid priests capitalized upon such fears by nurturing the belief that evil spirits were responsible for bringing about the advent of cold weather and shorter hours of daylight. To placate the spirits, the priests initiated a festival honoring Samhain, the lord of the dead. The festival was on Oct. 31, the day before the beginning of the Celtic new year.

This "new year's eve" celebration gradually grew to ominous proportions. The priests ordered the people to extinguish all hearth fires and to gather around huge bonfires on hilltops. The fires were intended to frighten away the evil spirits and to honor the souls of people who had died during the past year. Religious rituals performed around the bonfires were followed by processions back into the villages, where embers from the large fires were used to reignite the hearth fires in each home.

The notion then developed that the souls of sinful persons, as well as all other evil spirits, were at large in the community during that night. To discourage these mysterious entities from acts of retribution, sacrifices were thrown into the bonfires. At first, the sacrifices were domesticated animals. Horses were popular because they were believed to be sacred to the Sun God, who needed attention because he was punishing the people by giving them fewer hours of daylight.

Black cats were a favorite sacrifice because they were thought to be evil spirits transformed into animals.¹

Sacrificing cats began in medieval times, when the Church decreed that felines were friends of the devil. With their darting eyes and sinister-looking coats the color of death, black cats became known as witches' mascots. They also were known as "familiars," through which witches could communicate with the spiritual world.²

(Note that we do not offer the above quotations as valid historical accounts, but merely as examples of popular contemporary explanations as to why people supposedly sacrifice black cats at Halloween.)

When questioned about their October policies, most animal shelter and humane society representatives affirm their belief that steps are necessary to prevent cats from becoming sacrificial Halloween victims but offer no tangible evidence that the phenomenon is real beyond their belief in it:

"As horrible as this may sound, cats are tortured around Halloween time," said Deborah Thomas, executive director of the Maryland SPCA, which for years has enforced a virtual moratorium on black cat adoptions in the days before Halloween. "It's just incredible what people will do to cats, as if they don't have any feelings." Although concrete information on Halloween cat cruelty is hard to obtain, shelters in Maryland and across the country for years have taken special care of black cats this time of year.³

"Some satanic cults sacrifice all-black or all-white cats as part of their rituals," said Nancy Suro, director of the Maxfund, a pet-adoption agency.

For the past six years, the Maxfund has called an annual October moratorium on any adoptions involving all-black or all-white cats. Even though Suro acknowledged she doesn't know how widespread the problem is, she said: "I know such activity goes on. We absolutely refuse to take any chances with these cats' lives."⁴

The problem — or the perception of it — follows folkloric patterns, with anecdotal reports becoming ever wider in scope. For example, ritualistic Halloween sacrifices are said to make use of white cats as well as black cats:

Although black cats are at greater risk when it comes to cult sacrifices, white cats — because of their link to purity and virginity — have become a target in recent years.⁴

The problem is also said to have expanded to endanger cats of any color:

Black cats are taboo. At least that's the rule at area shelters where black felines are locked away until after the holiday. Too often cats were adopted as accessories to costumes and spooky parties, then abandoned. "There are also so-called religious groups that sacrifice animals," said Leslie Eppick of the Glendale SPCA. "If desperate, they will take any cat, no matter what color."⁵

The activity is said to be no longer restricted to Halloween and to occur on other "satanic holidays" as well:

Nicky Ratliff, executive director of Humane Society of Carroll County [Maryland], does not allow black cats to be adopted before Halloween.

"Not only black cats, but also solid white cats. And not only on Halloween, but on several holidays on the satanic calendar," Ratliff said.³

The catnappings are said to be starting ever earlier in the year:

When Tina Sowers' lovable black cat, Isaiah, disappeared Oct. 5, she struggled to stay positive.

"But by the next evening it all started to sink in," said Sowers, who shares her home with five other felines, all of varying colors. Isaiah's black, it's nearly Halloween, and he's the only cat that's missing from her home.

"It's an awful thing to think about but there are people who do these things to cats around this time of year," the north Phoenix housewife said. "Me and my neighbors know we have to protect our cats, but it's so early in October."⁶

Halloween-related animal abductions are said to not only begin as early as August, but to include several breeds of dogs as well:

Lillian Dubois-Tercero, president and executive director of Arizona Pet Line, a non-profit lost-and-found pet service in Phoenix, said that according to her computerized records, Halloween catnapping commences as early as late August.

"Already this year we have reports of 21 missing black cats, 12 white cats and 15 dogs from the end of August to October 14," she said, all within an area that runs from 51st Avenue to

32nd Street and Thomas to Cactus roads. It's also a tally that is right on target with numbers from the past three years.

"The disappearance of symbolized occult animals like black and white cats and Rottweilers, Dobermans and Great Danes starts the same time every year," she said.⁶

What to make of all these claims? Contemporary news accounts are a bundle of contradictory and conflicting information. Some veterinarians, law enforcement officials, and shelter operators assert that claims of feline sacrifices at Halloween are overblown:

Dr. Leslie Sinclair, a veterinarian who is director of companion animal care for the Humane Society of the United States, said shelters across the country ban adoptions at this time of year — or at least closely scrutinize adoption applicants.

Although many shelter operators acknowledge having little or no first-hand experience with animal sacrifices on Halloween, they have long traded tales of black cats being decapitated, disemboweled or skinned to mark the holiday. Shelter operators say pet owners should keep their pets indoors at Halloween.

But tales of widespread animal torture on Halloween might be more legend than real, Sinclair said. She said that society officials employed a clipping service to survey news accounts of feline carnage surrounding Halloween 1996 — and found nothing.

Michael F. Ryan — an investigator with the Baltimore state's attorney's office who has advised police departments on the practices of devil worshipers — said no one should fear that black cats are about to be singled out for satanic sacrifice.

"It's no more significant than a white dog, a brown dog or a polka-dotted kangaroo," he said. "The more attention people give to this myth, it just helps to ride along on a wave that takes on a life of its own. It's just not there."³

Some offer accounts that border on the ridiculous to validate their belief in satanic catnappings:

Two years ago, shelter workers at the Brooklyn Animal Resource Coalition in Williamsburg were on red alert when a woman dressed as a witch came in and insisted on adopting a black cat.

"We told her no," said BARC Vice President Vinny Spinola, whose shelter receives more than a dozen requests for black cats each Halloween and also has issued a moratorium on black-cat adoptions. "We knew she only wanted the cat for a Halloween ritual."

Litke at ASPCA recalled a spooky episode with a woman who had adopted a black cat.

"We called two days later to check on the cat, and she told us the cat was dead."

The woman wouldn't tell the ASPCA how the cat died but said workers could pick up the body.

"When we got there, she was gone and so was the cat," Litke said. "All we found was an empty apartment. We never found the body."²

Some offer scattered anecdotal accounts of black cat mutilations:

Interviews with shelter managers and a search of regional newspapers turned up nearly a dozen reports of black cat mutilations over the past four Halloweens. Cat bones and body parts were found near a Teterboro, N.J., shelter. In Wausau, Wis., a black cat was shaved and an occult insignia was carved into its side. A black cat was burned alive in Doylestown, Ohio. In Sanford, Fla., authorities found one black cat beheaded and three others with knife wounds.⁷

Although no law enforcement agency or animal protection group we contacted could provide statistics about Halloween-related animal killings or abuse, the consensus is that although incidents of animal abuse may rise slightly around Halloween, it's a year-around problem, and it has far more to do with poorly-behaved kids than with organized "satanic cults":

Far too often, the animals are tortured and sacrificed during pseudo satanic-based rituals.

"But not by the real religious satanic groups," [Lillian Dubois-Tercero, president and executive director of Arizona Pet Line] stressed. "They don't sacrifice cats and dogs. It's the idiot juveniles (who are) responsible who don't know what they're doing."

Kim Hicks, spokesperson for the Arizona Humane Society, agreed that it's not religious groups such as the Wiccans that are stealing and killing animals.

"Wiccans are actually an anti-cruelty (to animals) group who hold animals in a higher regard than they do humans," she said. "I think it's more like the people who dabble in the occult who are dangerous, and my guess would be it's troubled teenagers."

The problem is magnified at Halloween time, when any unusual or unexplained animal death is automatically attributed to Halloween-related satanic activity:

Hicks cited a series of 12 to 14 cat torture and mutilation cases last fall in the Ahwatukee Foothills, five of which were confirmed by necropsies to have been killed by humans. All were thought to be perpetrated by neighborhood teens.⁶

Note that the article cited above refers to "12 to 14 cat torture and mutilation cases" but avers that only five of the cats were confirmed to have been killed by "humans." If the other seven to nine cases had not been linked to human activity, then why were they reported as incidents of "torture and mutilation"? The fact is that cats are frequently killed by larger animals such as coyotes and through a variety of accidental means, but both types of deaths (and unexplained disappearances) are often mistakenly chalked up to the work of "satanic cults" and described as cases of "torture and mutilation" when the deaths occur around Halloween.

Some argue that, real phenomenon or not, Halloween cat sacrifices don't merit a radical change in shelters' adoption policies, because that's not where the perpetrators obtain their animals:

"We definitely get a little tighter in our adoption screening, especially the week before Halloween, and we don't allow any black-cat adoptions on Halloween day," said Karen Gnaegy, manager of the Animal Rescue and Adoption Society.

But she added: "Most cults are going to get their cats off their streets. They're not going to come into a shelter and pay \$40 and go through a background check."⁴

Are the dangers "satanic rites" pose to cats at Halloween time a real, widespread phenomenon, or largely a self-perpetuating Halloween myth? What evidence we could gather was inconclusive. Certainly, though, shelters' being extra-careful with feline adoptions just before Halloween to prevent the "renting" of cats for decorative purposes is a prudent precaution. If Halloween policies also help dissuade those who might inflict harm on adopted pets, so much the better.

Last updated: 27 October 2005



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Of the NAMES, or Reputed Names, of Eight Hundred and Thirty. Lewd and Scandalous Persons, who, by the Endeavours of a SOCIETY for Promoting a Reformation of Manners in the City of London, and Suburbs thereof, have been Legally Prosecuted and Convicted as *Keepers of Houses of Bawdry and Disorder*, or as *Whores, Night-Walkers, &c.* And who have thereupon been Sentenced by the Magistrates as the Law directs, and have accordingly been Punish'd, (many of them divers times) either by *Carting, Whipping, Flogging, Imprisonment, or Suppressing their Licences.* All which (besides the Prosecution of many Notorious *Curfews, Swearers, Sabbath-Breakers, and Drunkards*, not here infer'd) hath been Effected by the Society aforesaid since the Printing of the Ten former LISTS, which consisted of 7995 Persons.

[illegible]

NOTE, B. h. signifies Bowdy House, W. White, D. h. Disorderly House, D. p. Disorderly Person, and P. p. Pick-Pocket.

Printed in the Year 1796

The Total is £10.

NOTE. The figures like the former editions of the Catalogue of the Year 1705. but and ending at C

He was handsome, dress'd so flash, with curly moustache
Of himself he seemed so vain,
Yet so very courteous he made, ample room for me,
By his side in the railway train.
He chatted so with me, pleasing seemed to be,
And spoke in a delicate strain,
He asked me, " Was I wed ? " " Oh no, sir," I said,
To the gent in the railway train.

He said I was divine, put his lips to mine,
Kissed me again and again,
Goodness gracious knows, I blushed like any rose,
To resist him I felt 'twas vain.
But oh ! one fatal kiss, his moustache did miss,
On his lip I look'd for in vain,
It was sticking to my chin, how the passengers did grin,
At me in the railway train.

The B.B.C. found themselves in a prickly situation last night over an appeal they had made during the day for hedgehogs for use in a television production of *Alice in Wonderland*.

They wanted them for filming the croquet game sequence. Their request brought protests from the R.S.P.C.A., the Universities' Federation for Animal Welfare, and animal lovers.

The R.S.P.C.A., after telephone calls and telegrams from the public, sent an inspector to the B.B.C. to find out what it was all about. U.F.A.W. said that "apart from the fact that hedgehogs do not really make good croquet balls, their collection by the public for dispatch to the B.B.C. will involve suffering".

This was a punishable offence. Hedgehogs also carried various diseases such as brucellosis which might infect man, they added.

VISIT BY INSPECTOR

The B.B.C. said last night that the appeal went out on the programme *Today*. Listeners were asked to ring Shepherds Bush 8000 if they could supply hedgehogs. Three dozen were required and they had received "some response" already from the public. So far no date had been fixed for the programme which was to be produced by Mr. Jonathan Miller.

The R.S.P.C.A. said: "It is deplorable that an organization like the B.B.C. should make a statement implying that people should take hedgehogs, and that they are going to be used in this way.

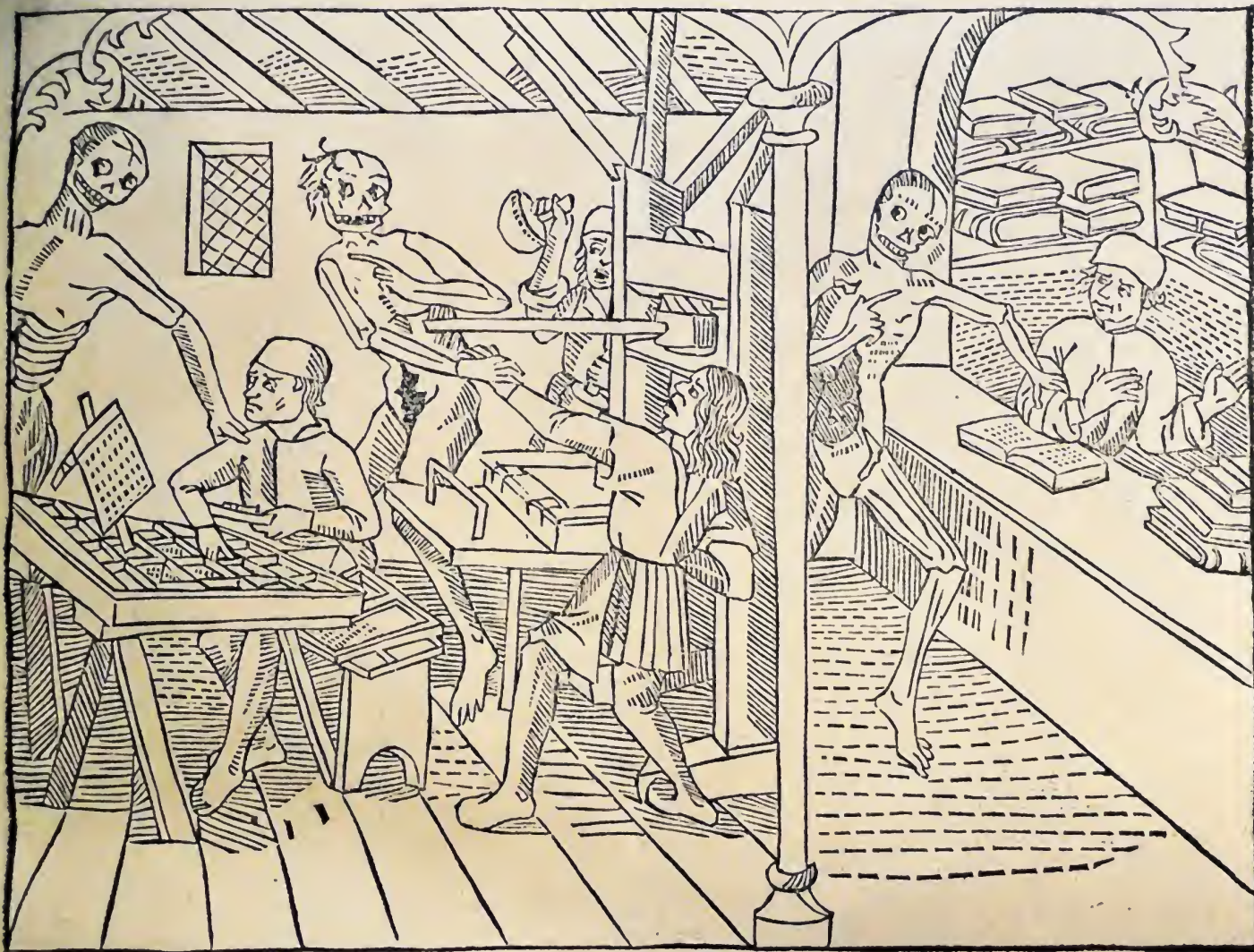
"An inspector went to the B.B.C. We were assured that the hedgehogs would stay in the garden, and that they were not going to be used as croquet balls. We were also assured that there would be no mis-handling of the hedgehogs."

The Sicilian Love Potion.

A Sicilian love potion is made of the lover's own blood as follows: A few drops of blood are placed in an eggshell, exposed to the sun for three days and to the dew for three nights, and then placed on hot ashes until the whole is reduced to a fine powder. This powder is administered surreptitiously to the object of affection in a cup of coffee or a glass of wine.

Mors refecat/mors omne necat quod carne creatur
Magnificos premit ⁊ modicos/cunctis dominatur.

Nobiliū tenet imperiū nulli reueretur
Tam ducibus q̃z principib⁹ cōmunis habetur.



Nunc ubi ius/ubi lex/ubi vox/ubi flos iuuenilis.hic nisi pus/nisi fex/nisi terre precio vilis.

Yadokai (夜道怪) - The Night Path Walkers

From the pages of Record of Yokai Encountered,
as recorded by Jisai, retired sea captain, in 1652.

“... Not all who go in search of truth find their destination. Some get lost on the way, drifting down forbidden trails until they are consumed, drifting from the narrow road and transforming into creatures of darkness. These are the yadokai—the night path walkers. Once holy men, yadokai were monks who found the demands of pilgrimage too grueling and fell to murder, robbery, and other twisted horrors such as the consuming of human flesh. They are bogiemen; child stealers and vampiric haunters of the roadways. Their twisted path often intersected with that of Kitsu and Ibo ... ”



THE CANTERBURY.

A very attractive programme has been arranged by Mr George Adney Payne for the delectation of the visitors to this well-patronised South London place of amusement. The most novel feature of the current bill-of-fare is the appearance of Mr C. H. Unthan, who is known as "the armless wonder." According to the account which this ingenuous gentleman gives of himself, he was born without arms, and from a very early age his feet have served him in the place of hands. He states that he is able without assistance to dress, wash, and shave himself. Having given these particulars, the armless gentleman proceeds to afford ocular proof of what he can accomplish by means of legs and feet alone. Seated in a chair and with his feet resting upon a stool he plays a solo on the violin in really excellent style. He next seats himself at a table, and his attendant takes a seat on the opposite side. He lights a cigarette and places it in his mouth, and offers his companion one. They then have a game at nap, the armless player shuffling and dealing the cards. A bottle of wine is produced, uncorked by Mr Unthan, who pours the liquid into the glasses, and drinks with his companion. In conclusion, the gentleman without arms gives an exhibition of his skill as a marksman. With a rifle held by his feet and legs he sends a bullet through white visiting cards placed at some distance. The cards, which bear Unthan's name written with his foot, are afterwards handed round to the occupants of the stalls. His last achievement is to take steady aim and cut a card edgewise. Mr Unthan, who is loudly applauded, is undoubtedly a living proof of the truth of the saying that "Necessity knows no law." The original panto-

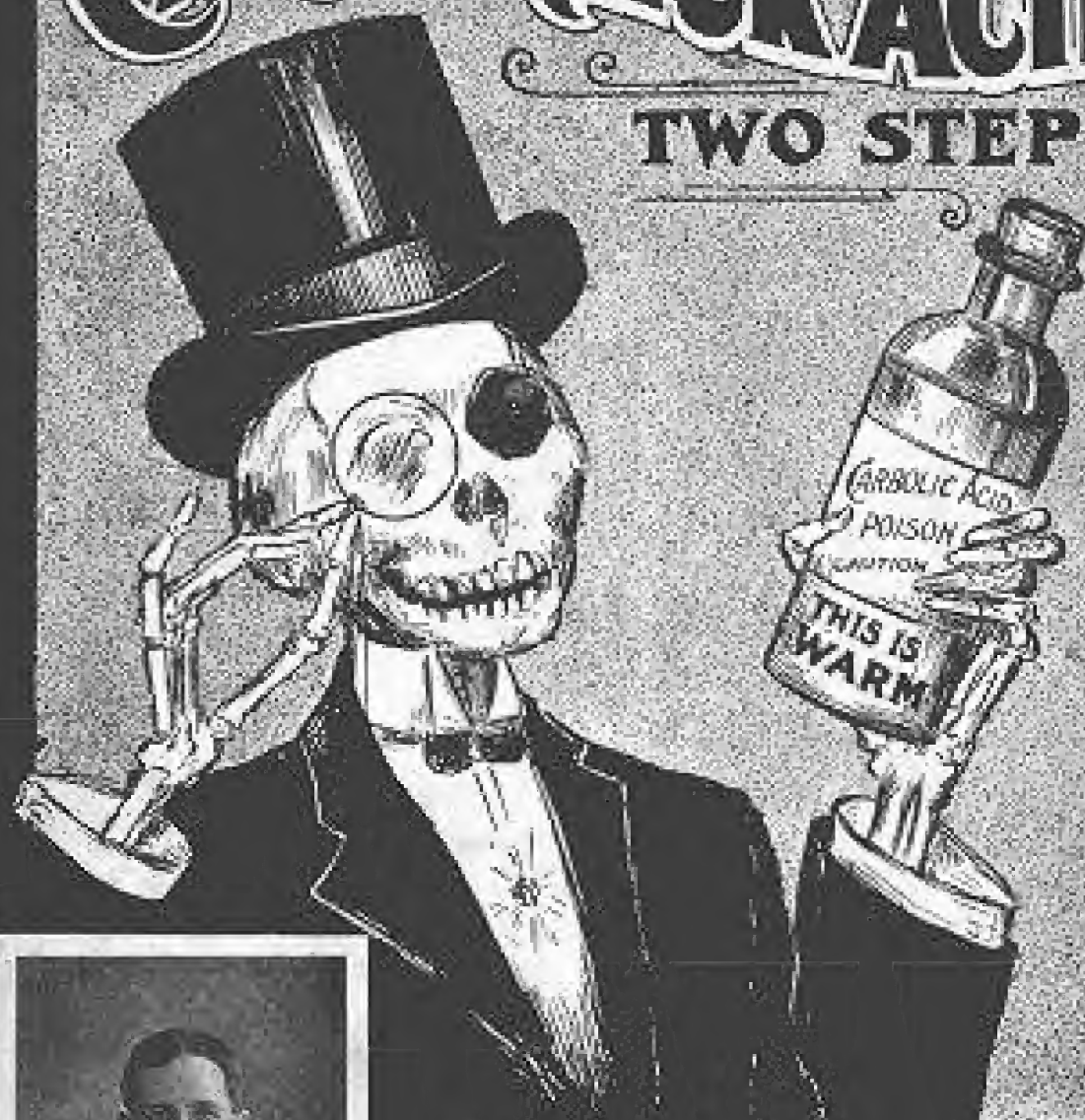






CARBARLICK ACID

TWO STEP



COMPOSED BY
CLARENCE C. WILEY

PUBLISHED BY
GILES BROTHERS QUINCY, ILL.

Fig1.



FARR'S IMPROVED FLEXIBLE UTERINE SUPPORTERS.

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS. (Patents allowed Oct. 16th, 1883.)

You will see by the cuts that I make two styles of Combined Abdominal and Uterine Supporters, each being supplied with Elastic Belts and Adjustable Pads for the Back and Kidneys. They are the only perfectly easy and efficient Uterine Supporter in use. The cup is made of pure rubber, with a coil spring moulded or imbedded in the stem, which gives it rigidity enough to hold the weight, yet it conforms and yields to the varying positions of the body, whether sitting or sleeping. It is perfectly easy, and gives the wearer no inconvenience whatever. It is easy to insert, and is held in position by two elastic cords attached to the Belt (as shown in the cuts), and being supplied with Adjustable Pads for the Back or Kidneys, thus relieving the Spine from all pressure, and enables you to put the pressure directly over the weak or painful parts. In fact, the Combined Abdominal, Back, Kidney and Uterine Supporter is by far the best that has ever been offered to the profession or public. I make 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inch belts. I also make three sizes of Flexible Cups, Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Two length Stems, 2½ and 3 inch. The prices, to physicians, are as follows:

Improved Combined Abdominal and Uterine Supporter, as shown in Fig. No. 1, . . .	\$5 00	Adjustable Pad Belt, without Cup, as shown in Fig. 2, . . .	\$3 00
Combined Adjustable Pad Supporter, as shown in Fig. 2, . . .	4 00	Plain Non-elastic Belt, with Uterine Cup, 3-100	
Improved Belt, without Cup, as shown in Fig. 1, . . .	3 00	Back and Kidney Belt alone (without Cup, and two Pads only), Fig. 2, . . .	1 50
		Flexible Uterine Cup, . . .	2 00
		Pelvic Uterine Supporters, . . .	3 00

Fig2.



FARR'S PATENT LADIES' MENSTRUAL RECEPTACLE.

Sold by all Druggists and at Ladies' Furnishing Stores, etc.

This is the only Menstrual Receptacle in use, and is the grandest invention for the convenience and cleanliness of ladies. It gives entire satisfaction in all cases. No lady can afford to be without one. Its use is indispensable whether traveling or at home, and can be worn from the commencement of the menstrual period until its close.

By its use the menstrual discharge is conducted directly from the uterus (or womb) into the receptacle, without coming in contact with the parts in any manner whatever. At night, before retiring, the fluid can and should be removed, simply by removing a cap, without removing the instrument. At the close of the period the instrument is removed, a Syringe is attached, and warm water or soap-suds forced through, which will clean it perfectly. It is then put aside until its use is required again. You will see in Fig. 1 an exact Cut of the Receptacle as worn. It



is made of pure, soft rubber, with a flexible cup and stem to be inserted in the Vagina, the cup receiving the neck of the womb; hence the discharge is carried through the stem of the cup by means of a large hole, and deposited in the Receptacle, which is perfectly tight. It is so constructed and shaped that it does not interfere with any of nature's requirements, or give the wearer the least inconvenience.

By the use of this instrument a lady avoids all unpleasantness and the use of napkins, trouble of changing, or expense of washing, the saving in which alone would be enough to pay for the Receptacle in a short time. They are very durable, and, with care, will last years. The price is very low, to them come within the reach of all. I sell a very good Syringe, complete, with the Receptacle, if desired. If you have a bulb and hose syringe, it can readily be attached to the instrument; if you have none it is indispensable. I furnish them with the Receptacle very low, or the Receptacle alone, in a nice box, as follows:

Price of Menstrual Receptacle, . . . \$1.00 each.
and Syringe, . . . 50
Sent by mail or express, as desired, to any address upon receipt of the money, by P. O. Order, Registered letter, Check or Draft, payable to my order.
P. S.—Full directions accompany each instrument.

FARR'S PATENT PELVIC UTERINE SUPPORTER.

Sold by Druggists and Surgical Instrument Dealers everywhere.

The Cut represents a Pelvic or Self-Supporting Uterine Supporter. It has a cup on either end (the lower one being inverted) connected by a flexible stem with a hole extending through its entire length. It is inserted in the vagina. The upper cup receives the neck of the uterus. The lower cup is also inserted, the rim resting on the pelvic



floor. It so conforms to the parts that it does not rest on the anterior or posterior wall, but on the sides of the pelvic floor; thus it has a natural, firm bearing. Consequently, the walls of the vagina are not dilated as in the case of a Pessary of ordinary make, but is allowed to keep its natural position, thus assisting nature, holding the weight by means of its natural elasticity, enabling the ligaments to contract without destroying any of the natural support derived from the vaginal walls, and unlike all other uterine supporters, it requires no cords or belts, but it is complete and simple within itself, requiring no appliances to hold and keep it in position. It being made of pure soft rubber, it is perfectly easy and comfortable to wear, and does not cause the least inconvenience to the most sensitive patient.

I make three sizes of cups, viz.: Small, 1½ inches; Medium, 2 inches; Large, 2½ inches. Three lengths stem, Short, Medium, and Long. Price to Physicians, \$2.00 each.

PATENT IMPROVED FLEXIBLE RING PESSARY.

Patented May 12th, 1883.

No. 2.—1-inch outside diameter.
No. 3.—1½-inch outside diameter.

No. 4.—1¾-inch outside diameter.
No. 5.—2-inch outside diameter.

No. 6.—2½-inch outside diameter.
No. 7.—3-inch outside diameter.

Price, to physicians, 50 cents each, or \$5.00 per dozen.

Dr. H. G. FARR, Sole Manufacturer
75 Essex Street, Boston, Mass.

Readers, Please Mention AMERICAN DRUGGIST when Writing or Buying.

nyamcenterforhistory.org



TO LADIES! IMPORTANT.

A lady writes:—"I have been I think for the year 'Compound Tablets' I had daily when pills for over three months in vain. As for my system, on Saturday I wrote for a cure of my 'disordered Tablets, and today (Monday) I am now relieved of all misery and anxiety. You may publish this notice if you wish."

"Compound Tablets" are for women to take and physicians, before giving them. They are to be used, and before the doctor's quick and positive remedy for all irregularities and abnormalities may only be done with the certainty of success.

From 10 to 12 and 14, or forwarded by post, in sealed box, to any part of the Kingdom, on receipt of 1s. 3d. each, to the

LONDON AND CONTINENTAL DRUG COMPANY,
ROXBURY ROAD, ST. JAMES'S,
WELL, LONDON, S.W.

THE ILLUSTRATED Police News LAW COURTS AND WEEKLY RECORD

ESTABLISHED 1864.

TO LADIES

A little book just published by Dr. Allen, entitled:

"HEALTH, WEALTH, AND HAPPINESS;"

How Obtained and Preserved.

It is of priceless value to every married and single woman, as it deals with matters that cannot possibly be too widely known. It explains fully how all irregularities and abnormalities can be prevented or removed, and if the serious troubles contained in following pages of happiness may be obtained by every woman in place of the too common, horrible, senseless and misery resulting from want of knowledge that want of thought.

A copy of this book will be presented gratis and post free during the next few weeks to every lady on receipt of addressed envelope to

THE MANAGERESS,
145, Stockwell Road, S.W.

No. 1705.

[REGISTERED FOR CIRCULATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1896.

Price One Penny.

ALARMING EXPERIENCE OF FAIR BATHERS WHO ARE ATTACKED BY AN OCTOPUS.

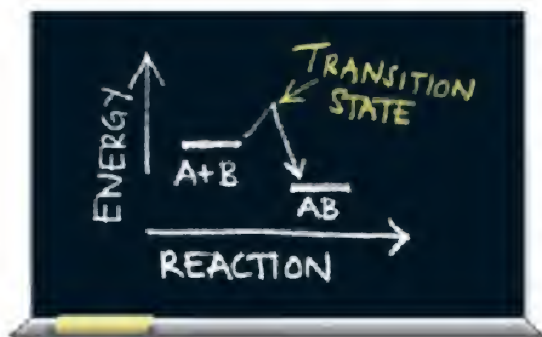


For the First Time Chemists Measure the Energy of a Chemical Reaction's Transition State

scientificamerican.com

The ability to quantify the elusive moment when entities in a reaction convert "is important wherever chemistry is important," researchers say

• By Charles Schmidt on March 1, 2016



Hike from one valley to another via a mountain pass, and eventually you'll come to the highest point of your journey, where you'll probably stop briefly to take in the view before descending. That moment serves as a good analogy to one of chemistry's mysteries: the brief transition state that occurs just as molecules in a reaction are about to transform into new chemical species.

Scientists have long regarded transition states as too unstable and fleeting to be observed. But chemists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have now measured the energy of a transition state. Just as the height of a mountain pass constrains how long it will take a hiker to reach the summit, energetic properties of a transition state govern how long it takes for chemical reactants to adopt new conformations.

To make the crucial measurements, Joshua Baraban, then a graduate student at M.I.T., and his colleagues excited acetylene with a laser. In this simple reaction, the molecule twists from a linear to a zigzag conformation. Acetylene vibrated predictably as it absorbed light at greater intensities, but in the instant before it went from straight to zigzag, the vibrations stopped, providing a window into the elusive transition state.

"We found that the frequency of the vibrations dips to zero just as the molecule goes over the hump from one conformation to another," says Baraban, now at the University of Colorado Boulder. By measuring the energy it took until the vibrations paused, the team could characterize the transition state's energetic properties. The results were published recently in the journal *Science*.

The method also worked to track the transition state of the more complex conversion of hydrogen cyanide to hydrogen isocyanide, found Baraban's colleague Georg Mellau of Justus Liebig University Giessen in Germany. The ability to quantify this brief moment "is important wherever chemistry is important," Baraban says. For instance, better knowledge of transition states in fuel-combustion reactions could allow scientists to engineer cars with better gas mileage.

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Hundreds mysteriously passing out in Kazakh village

08:03 EST, 18 February 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Kazakh village Berezovka where children are struck with 'Sleepy Hollow' disease



Bizarre: 1,500 people had to be evacuated from a Kazakh village after dozens of children (pictured) began mysteriously passing out **Mystery:** Children in the village of Berezovka (pictured) had to be rushed to hospital after passing out and falling off their seats in class **Illness:** Other children (pictured) suffered painful convulsions and cramps lost all feeling in their limbs and felt their eyesight getting worse **Blame:** Deputy Prime Minister Saparbayev has blamed the children's (pictured) illnesses on a faulty chimney and hot water plant at the local school **Hospitalised:** The Karachaganak Petroleum Operating (KPO) facility and its parent company, Shell, have denied the plant is behind the illnesses local children (pictured) are suffering **Unconscious:** This young girl is one of more than 100 to be struck down with the illness since November 2014 **Anger:** Parents are blaming their children's illnesses on the toxic emissions from a local oil and gas factory **Emergency:** Several children (pictured) had to be collected by their parents or rushed to hospital after passing out in class **Struck down:** Parents have accused the KPO - which is owned by Shell - of covering up what they believe was an 'emergency' at the factory (pictured, children who fell ill from mystery illness) **Endemic:** US based campaigners claimed around '50 per cent of the villagers are chronically ill and 80 per cent of the children suffer from respiratory diseases' **Victim:** Dinara Irmikbaeva (pictured), 17, was treated at four different hospitals after suddenly fainting in school **Unexplained:** Many locals and young children have already been relocated to the village of Aksai, around 15 miles away, but continue to suffer from attacks of dizziness and unconsciousness there too **Toxic:** Independent monitors were reported to have found dangerous chemicals including hydrogen sulfide, which is very poisonous, in Berezovka's air **Safe:** But officials claimed the village was outside the 'hazardous zone' of toxic emissions which included hydrogen sulfide and 20 other poisonous substances **Sleepy Hollow:** The bizarre goings on in Berezovka (pictured) have been compared to those in Kalachi, another Kazakh village dubbed 'Sleepy Hollow', where locals began inexplicably falling asleep for days at a time

EXCLUSIVE - Mysterious Kazakh 'village of the damned' where children with 'Sleepy Hollow' disease, have fits, blurred vision, stomach cramps and fall asleep for DAYS

- Children are suffering from mystery illness in Kazakh village of Berezovka
- They complained of having dizziness, numb limbs, fits, cramps, nausea
- Parents say children fall off their chairs in school and stay asleep for days
- They say they have been poisoned by toxic emissions from power station
- But owners Shell and its foreign partners and government deny allegations
- 1,500 residents moved 15 miles away to Aksai - but still get the symptoms

By Will Stewart In Moscow for MailOnline

A Kazakh village of 1,500 people is being abandoned after children were struck down by a mystery illness which led them to fall asleep for days.

Dozens of school children struck down by the bizarre 'Sleepy Hollow' disease have fallen off seats in class, have tummy cramps, convulsions, lose feeling in their limbs, dizziness and blurred eyesight.

A father whose little boy was struck down by the strange symptoms told MailOnline: 'Every

day my son goes to school and by 11 am, the teachers call me to take him home because he became ill again.'

Those living in the village of Berezovka, western Kazakhstan have been evacuated to the village of Aksai, around 15 miles away - but still suffer from dizziness and fall asleep for up to a week at a time.

Parents in Berezovka blame the symptoms on toxic emissions being emitted from the Karachaganak Petroleum Operating power station run by energy giant Shell.



They say the symptoms began in November 2014 when 90 people fell ill after there was a 'loud noise' at the site and black smoke coming from one of the buildings.

The power station says the noise in November 18 months ago was from excess gas being burned off at the plant and denies causing the symptoms.

Young victims of the mystery illness have passed out at school during classes over the past 18 months.



Alia Kusmangalieva, whose 14-year-old daughter Alina collapsed at school, told MailOnline: 'We got a call from the school and was told that Alina felt unwell.'

'We were waiting for an ambulance for an hour and a half. All this time my daughter was unconscious. She did not wake up until she got an oxygen mask.'

Tiek Temirgaliev, the father of 12-year-old Termilan, who also kept fainting, said: 'Previously, he had convulsions.'

'After treatment in Aktobe [a nearby town] the convulsions stopped, but his vision deteriorated.

'Now, my boy suffers sharp pressure drops, sometimes his legs become numb and he cannot speak. Also, my son had pains in the chest, but not often.'

Oksana Nazbayeva, whose 12-year-old daughter Ruzanna suffered the same symptoms, added: 'Teachers say that Ruzanna will be sitting in class and then suddenly fall off her chair.'

Teachers say that Ruzanna will be sitting in class and then suddenly fall off her chair... She



© Crude Accountability / East2West News

could be walking down the hall and collapse

Oksana Nazbayeva, mother of 12-year-old Ruzanna

'She could be walking down the hall and collapse. My daughter was treated at the clinic in Aktobe. They cured convulsions - but now it has all started again.'

Parents have accused owners Kusmangalievaly owned by Reading based BG Group, a subsidiary of Shell - and the Kazakhstan government of covering up the 2014 incident, which they claim is the source of the illness.

Activists 'Crude Responsibility' claim there was an attempt to protect the reputations of the foreign partners working at one of the world's largest oil and gas fields.

It said: 'Almost 50 per cent of the villagers are chronically ill and 80 per cent of the children suffer from respiratory diseases.'



© Crude Accountability / East2West News

Dangerous chemicals, including hydrogen sulfide which is very poisonous, in Berezovka's air, independent monitors found.

But when officials inspected pollution levels they found them to be safe.

The country's Deputy Prime Minister Saparbayev blamed it on a faulty chimney and hot water plant at the local school.

According to our data, there is the impact of the boiler facility, which is located near

the school. The chimney does not meet all the standards
Deputy Prime Minister Berdybek Saparbayev

Saparbayev said: 'Our specialists, and psychologists have been working there. No excess of harmful substances was found in the atmosphere.'

The government said everyone from the village will be rehoused by the end of the year.



© Crude Accountability / East2West News



So far more than 1,500 people have been moved - which will increase to 1,808 from 423 families by 2017.

But attempts by parents who demanded that the village's children be sent abroad for medical checks have been rejected.

Concerns expressed by residents about an unhealthy environment since 2002 also fell on deaf ears.

After the first few people fainted in 2014, KPO said 'if there are lessons we need to learn from the results we will wholeheartedly apply these to our activities'.

It also said that an incident in November 2014 did not involve 'a release, emission or leak of gas, including hydrogen sulphide, in excess of permitted levels'.

The BG Group claimed there was 'no evidence that the emissions from KPO's operations were the cause of the illnesses'.



KPO had provided 'transport to medical treatment centres for patients', the British company added.

82 families have been moved into 128 new flats in two-story blocks in the town of Aksai... In 2016, we will fully resolve this problem
Regional head Nurlan Nogayev



In a statement, KPO said: 'We welcome the outcome of the independent investigation that show there is no evidence that the emissions from KPO's operations were the cause of the

illnesses which affect people in the village of Berezovka.

'Moreover, KPO supports the resolution that, as part of the possible further development of Karachaganak, in accordance with RoK [Kazakhstan] legislation the Sanitary Protection Zone might require further reassessment.

'KPO looks forward to contributing to this work and will comply with all regulatory



requirements.

The bizarre goings on in Berezovka have been compared to those in Kalachi, another Kazakh village dubbed 'Sleepy Hollow', where locals began inexplicably falling asleep for days at a time.

That phenomenon was put down to toxic gases seeping to the surface from a disused Soviet era uranium mine.

As well as suddenly dozing off, sometimes for days at a time, residents also complained of strange hallucinations.

One girl imagined she saw an elephant's trunk on her mother, and a boy said saw horses and light bulbs flying around him.

As in Berezovka, all villagers in Kalachi are being relocated to other areas. Last year, Saparbayev said detailed tests showed a disused Soviet uranium mine was behind the strange phenomenon.

Comments (2)

Clouds are nice, northshire Scotland, Cameroon, 1 day ago

Big companies that cause illness or injury almost always deny they are to blame.

AndyT, London, 1 day ago

Haven't we read this before a year or two ago?

Part of the Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday & Metro Media Group

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Children of Chernobyl growing up in the radioactive 'dead zone'

18:59, 16 Feb 2016 Updated 19:00, 16 Feb 2016 By Allan Hall

mirror.co.uk



North Downs Picture Agency

Shadow of Chernobyl: Nelia Tretyidic with her baby Maria in the kitchen of her home in the town of Narodychi

Nelia Tretyidic is boiling milk for porridge for her four-month-old daughter Maria at their tiny home in the ramshackle town of Narodychi in Ukraine.

The milk comes from a local farm. As do the vegetables, the meat and the fruit the family will eat for lunch.

In virtually any other place on earth, no-one would bat an eyelid at this - it would be lauded as eco-friendly, healthy, natural and supportive of the neighbourhood economy.

But Narodychi is no ordinary place and no ordinary community.

It is barely 50 miles from the Vladimir Illyich Lenin power plant which exploded in April 1986, triggering the greatest atomic crisis in history.

The world knows the place better by the town where the nuclear station was situated: Chernobyl.



North Downs Picture Agency

Dead zone: The children of Narodychi live just a few miles from the ruined nuclear power plant

Now Nelia, 34, her husband Myhikylo, 39, and Maria, live in what was known as the dead zone, around the shattered reactor of Block 4 to try to limit the radioactive fallout on humans.

Thirty years on and perhaps as many as a million deaths later, parts of the dead zone are being repopulated by those who know the risks but who

choose to live there anyway because it gives them a home.

Three thousand people who now reside in Narodychi, opened up to settlers 13 years ago, even though the soil it is on will remain radioactive for another 26,000 years.

New arrivals include refugees from Donetsk and other eastern towns, exiles from the fighting there with separatists who want to belong to Russia and not Ukraine.

What is astonishing, unfathomable to outsiders is that people like Nelia opt to live there, the silent hulk of the Chernobyl plant somewhere over the tree-lined horizon weighing on their minds and bodies like an evil villain's castle in a Grimm fairy tale.



North Downs Picture Agency

Hard life: People have moved back into the dead zone

"It is always something you think about," teacher Nelia says.

"I have blood pressure problems, hypertension. Is it from Chernobyl? Perhaps. It is something I try not to dwell on, but I do. We all do.

"I lived in the next village, Selets, but that is now totally depopulated, all the people gone, all the homes abandoned.

"It doesn't exist anymore, another casualty of Chernobyl. The government encouraged us to move here and I like the place.

"We got a house for free; it was of course abandoned when the original occupants were moved out of the zone.



Spectacular drone footage shows dramatic recovery of Chernobyl nuclear power plant site

"It is true that most people in town have at least one relative with cancer. But we all have regular health checks and we are, so far, largely OK.

"People like us, the options of where to live and what to do are limited. We get on with our lives, it is all we can do."

Aged 28, her friend Lena Lyzh was not even born when, on April 26 1986, a test

on the then-Soviet power plant at Chernobyl went catastrophically wrong.

The explosion and resulting fire spewed monumental amounts of deadly radioactive material 3,000 feet into the night sky, infusing in rainclouds which would allow it to fall back to earth from Belarus to Britain, contaminating crops, wildlife and people.

It took the authorities until 1991 to take readings to determine that the town was highly radioactive.



North Downs Picture Agency

Eerie: A big wheel stands motionless close to Chernobyl 30 years after the disaster

All 93,000 inhabitants, including 20,000 children, were evacuated and dispersed and all industrial enterprises closed down.

But in a dramatic turnaround, it was inexplicably declared habitable again in 2003.

North Downs Picture Agency

Ever since then the numbers of settlers has continued to climb, but not all residents are convinced the authorities were telling them the truth about the “safety” of living in such a place.

Lena has lived in Narodychi for the past ten years. Her parents were persuaded to inhabit the place with the offer of jobs at a local factory and a free house.

Lena says: "We have two people in our family with cancer. Everyone knows someone with cancer, but isn't that also true of people who don't live near Chernobyl?"



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Agency

New life: Lena Lyzh 28 walking home in the town

"We need more jobs around here, something more to do in the evenings. But it is not a bad place to live."

"People say it is unfair to raise children here because of the dangers, but you have to have children if you are going to repopulate these places and bring them back to life.

"There is little money for anything in Ukraine: for health, housing, welfare. You get by. Chernobyl lives inside us all, for good and bad.

"It is just there and we are here. I would live somewhere else if I could, but the wheel stopped here for me.

Irina Trachule, 29, moved illegally into one of the abandoned homes in the town 15 years ago

because her grandfather was one of the old men who fought the Nazis in World War Two and refused to be budged by an enemy called Cesium-137, Plutonium, Iodine-131 and Strontium-90, he could neither see, smell or hear.



North Downs Picture Agency

Refugee: Irina Trachule with her baby Yevgeny in a pram in the main street of the town

"He has since died and we find ourselves where we find ourselves," says Irina, who has a five month old baby called Yevgeny.

"I was frightened when I first came here and I cried a lot. I was a teenager then and I knew about Chernobyl and what had happened there.

"I am well, but who knows for how long? Chernobyl is on your mind all the time.

"The hospital is full of cancer cases, but the government lies about it. We just try to get along."

Her friend Delia Kistel, 27, has been a resident for six years, her parents choosing to move in what was formerly part of the official 'alienation zone' after they were given jobs in a sewing-accessories factory in town.



Pripyat Chernobyl in 2014 captured by eerie drone footage

Delia says: "I hate it here. I don't think it is safe. We are living on a time bomb. No-one really tells us the truth about this place and what is safe and what is not.

"I guess we will know for sure when we catch something horrible and die from it.

"The Soviets lied about it and the Ukrainians took over from them in lying about it.

"The truth is buried in Russian archives somewhere, the real death toll, the real dangers now. We are the little people caught here."

The truth about Chernobyl is a difficult commodity to find in Ukraine or the Russian Federation.



North Downs Picture Agency

Safety fears: Everyone knows at least one person with cancer in the 'dead zone'

Some claim the disaster claimed just a few hundred lives, but the actual figure is believed by experts to as much as 985,000 as a result of the explosion and fire, and cancer due to the radiation spread by the wind.

When the authorities declared Narodychi habitable once again, it meant the alienation zone shrank to a

30km radius around the wrecked power plant.

Here, close to 4,000 people work in Chernobyl to this day.

They are the nurses, doctors, engineers, cooks and scientists toiling still to render safe the 147 tons of radioactive material in the husk of the broken reactor.

Unlike the residents of Narodychi not far away, they dress in special anti-radiation suits and are tested for radiation four times a day.



North Downs Picture Agency

Still radioactive: Workers arriving at the entrance of the Dead Zone

They are building a colossal £1.4billion steel and rubber sheath which will, within the next year or two, be slid on rails over the entire plant to stop the elements from further degrading the current sarcophagus, erected by heroic workers and soldiers - now all dead or sick - in the months following the accident.

They share Chernobyl with the ghosts of its past and handfuls of atomic tourists who are bussed in to gaze at the wilderness left behind by the evacuation of 94 villages and two cities where once 130,000 people lived, loved, worked and played.

Wolves, wild horses, bats, rats, rabbits and mice roam un-hunted in the wilderness where plant life is mutated and the soil irradiated.

They even prowl through the eerie desolation of Pripyat, once a Soviet showcase city of 50,000 people.

Pripyat was evacuated the day following the blast as people collapsed on the streets, blood running from their noses, their faces gripped by stabbing pins-and-needles pain, their mouths flooded with the metallic taste of radiation.

Now it has the look of a Hollywood movie portraying nuclear Armageddon. The big Ferris wheel that will never turn again, the dodgem cars immobilised for all time.



North Downs Picture Agency

Shell: What remains Chernobyl 30 years after the disaster

When night falls over the alienation zone the banshee howl of the wolves can be heard echoing across the wilderness.

An estimated 170 people, too stubborn to move, too old to know fear - or to know better - live with them in houses without running water, electricity, gas or neighbours, spread out across a territory that remains, three decades

later, one of the most terrifying places on earth.

And at dusk 50 miles away in Narodychi, little Maria is put to bed by her mother who whispers the same prayer each night:

'Lord, oh the Great and Almighty,

Of your holy rays.'

As she draws the curtain on her room, she crosses herself and prays also that the pestilence that people around here call 'The Chernobyl sickness' does not cross her door.

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China urges 'space-saving' burials to cut land use - BBC News

bbc.com

By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

• 25 February 2016



Chinese families often take fastidious care of relatives' graves, especially on Tomb-Sweeping Day

Image copyrightAFP

People in China are being encouraged to opt for vertical burial or cremation under new government funeral guidelines aimed at coping with land scarcity.

It's hoped the guidance, issued by nine government departments, will promote environmentally friendly forms of burial that take up little or no land. These include burial

at sea and tree funerals - where ashes are interred beneath a newly planted tree. Shared family tombs and arranging coffins vertically also get the nod, as do smaller plots and gravestones. The guidelines stress that the funeral traditions of ethnic minorities should be respected.

Rapid development and urban growth has put pressure on the country's land resources, but state-run China Daily says previous attempts at reform have fallen foul of deep-rooted Chinese burial customs, despite measures such as a cremation competition. Cremation rates actually fell slightly between 2005 and 2012, from 53% to 49.5%, according to the Ministry for Civil Affairs, which wants it to reach 100% by the end of 2020. The government has urged members of the ruling Communist Party to "take the lead" or face punishment.

The move has been met with outrage on social media, with thousands of comments posted on the Sina Weibo microblogging site. "Has the government lost the plot?" one user exclaims, while another complains: "Even after life, death must be regulated." One person draws parallels with the country's chronic housing shortage: "No place to live during this lifetime, after death it's the same." But some are more philosophical. "Everyone dies - I don't mind what happens to me after death," one user says.

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Deadly attraction: China's bizarre corpse brides

01/03/2016

news.com.au

Women's bodies stolen from graves in China for bizarre ghost weddings

March 1, 2016 12:34am



Ancestor worship is huge in China, with relatives performing rituals to clean graves and make offerings to their dead relatives.

THEY can fetch up to \$20,000 a body, and desperate relatives are more than happy to pay up to get a corpse bride.

This is the alarming reality facing rural families in China, who shockingly regularly discover the bodies of loved ones have gone missing. The practice is fuelled by a belief that a newly deceased bachelor must be buried alongside a woman.

According to the bizarre tradition, which was outlawed under Communism, elderly single men are given a "bride" to be buried with when they die, with some considering it bad luck to pass into the next life without a female companion.

Some believe a "ghost wedding" prevents their dead bachelor relative becoming restless and returning to haunt and bring misfortune to the family.

Ghost weddings date back 3000 years, but despite being stamped out by China's ruling Communist party, the belief still exists, particularly in rural areas. The ghoulish ritual involves a corpse being reburied next to the dead man while drums are played in front of relatives.

Brides are more highly sought-after as desperate families look to complete their family tree, due to the country's gender imbalance.

Dongbao in China's northern Shanxi province, has reported 15 corpse thefts since 2013, while another 15 have simply vanished, UK newspaper *The Sunday Telegraph* reported.

Source: News Limited

Li Fucai told the paper his mother's remains were among those stolen by thieves and his devastated family had no idea where they were.

"Who knows where they took my mother?" he said. "She is now ill-gotten gains for thieves."



Increasingly, women's bodies are going missing, to be buried beside bachelors as a female companion for the next life.

Another man told how the remains of his great aunt and great-grandmother were stolen in recent months.

"My grandmother must now be wandering other villages, experiencing a painful afterlife," he said.

While body snatching is rare, it isn't unheard of in other areas across China.

Last October, police arrested three people in northern China on suspicion of stealing a woman's corpse to sell as a bride in a ghost wedding.

The main suspect had heard a woman had died in a nearby village in Shanxi province, and pretend to be her relative, negotiating a sale price of \$4000 for her corpse.

However, the three men were caught by villages raiding her tomb, *The Guardian* reported.

Ancestor worship is huge in China, with a strong belief in family. Relatives honour the dead and their gravesites in rituals that date back centuries.

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Chinese villagers hunt for mysterious large 'vampire' predator that has left behind one tantalising clue after killing 200 birds

1456710834

scmp.com

Villagers are searching for the bloodsucking killer of their chickens, which left a muddy webbed four-toed footprint the size of a child's hand

PUBLISHED : Sunday, 28 February, 2016, 3:24pm

UPDATED : Monday, 29 February, 2016, 9:53am



The hunt is on ... but so far this muddy, webbed four-toed footprint is the only clue left behind by a bloodsucking predator that has killed more than 200 chickens and ducks in a Chinese village. Photo: Youth.cn

The hunt is on ... but so far this muddy, webbed four-toed footprint is the only clue left behind by a bloodsucking predator that has killed more than 200 chickens and ducks in a Chinese village. Photo: Youth.cn

Chinese villagers are searching for a mysterious bloodsucking predator that has killed more than 200 chickens and ducks, mainland

media reports.

For the past week police and residents from the village in Pudong, close to the city of Shanghai, have been hunting for the culprit round the clock, the news portal Eastday.com reported on Saturday.

The predator has left behind just one tantalising clue – a muddy webbed four-toed

footprint.



More than 200 chickens and ducks have been killed by an unknown bloodsucking predator in a Chinese village in the past week. Photo: Youth.cn



A close-up photograph of the bloody wound left behind on the carcass of one of the dead chickens. Photo: Youth.cn

Villagers said the footprint was the size of five-year-old child's hand.

The unidentified predator has only sucked on the blood of its prey, rather than feeding on its meat, the report said.

Residents said many of their birds had died after being bitten during the evenings over the past week. Some rabbits that had been raised by farmers in the village had also died in the same way, the report said.

Villagers suspect the predator killing their animals has escaped from Shanghai Wild Animal Park, which lies about 2km from the village.

However, officials from the park told mainland media that none of its animals had gone missing recently.

Experts from the park have tried to help farmers catch the predator by making an iron cage, and luring it by hanging live chickens inside, but so far they have been unsuccessful.

The large number of animals killed by the predator has led to local police and villagers carrying out nighttime inspections of local livestock.

Internet users have questioned what the authorities were doing with the carcasses of the dead poultry and were concerned that they might end up being sold in local markets.

Comments

Jonathan Smith Feb 28th 2016

4:07pm

Probably the Dracula John Kerry sucking the blood of the chickens.

P Blair Feb 28th 2016

6:24pm

in reply to: ejmciii

Parasites? Didn't you know the famous story told by a NZ professor of Chemistry, that before the Anglos went to New Zealand there were no parasites. Same applies to the Americas, Australia and elsewhere.

I Gandhi Feb 28th 2016

8:21pm

in reply to: Jonathan Smith

The description of a large bloodsucking predator fits the bill for John Kerry!

ejmcihi Feb 28th 2016

4:58pm

in reply to: Jonathan Smith

Amusingly, I thought it was the vampire Xi draining the life of the chickens as well as the economic lifeblood of China. But communists are like that. Parasites.

ejmcihi Feb 28th 2016

3:33pm

They have lawyers in China?

thecanaryproject Feb 29th 2016

10:26am

the chucapbra again

Stay connected

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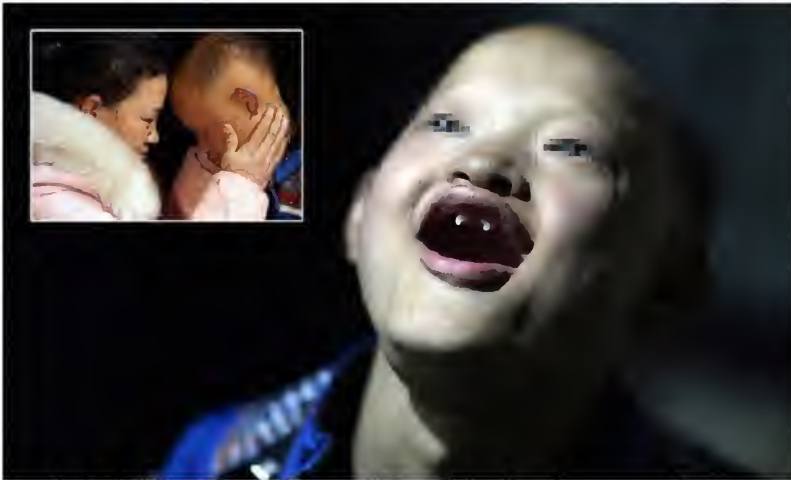
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Chinese boy suffering from ectodermal dysplasia wishes for new teeth

05:37 EST, 18 February 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Chinese boy who suffers from Ectodermal Dysplasia is called a 'vampire'



Labelled Fang Boy: 15-year-old Lan Hai suffers from a rare disease called ectodermal dysplasia. Loving mother: Ma Yuxu says that her son has spent most of his childhood in hospital being treated for fevers. Ectodermal Dysplasia: The disease meant that the boy's teeth were just two pegs by the time he was two. Self-conscious: The boy says the disease has affected his self confidence and a new set of teeth would help. Devoted mother: His mother sells food at a snack stand during the evenings to keep them financially afloat.

Tragic story of the 'fang boy':
Rare disease means 15-year-old with unusual teeth is constantly bullied... and neighbours are calling his family 'vampires'

- 15-year-old from Chongqing, China, suffers from Ectodermal Dysplasia
- Some his relatives also have the condition and locals call them 'vampires'
- The rare disease causes hair, teeth and nails to develop abnormally
- Teen has trouble eating and wishes that he could have

Daily Mail

.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

dental implants

By Sophie Williams For Mailonline

A teenager in China has been named 'fang boy' after his rare medical condition left him with just two pegs for teeth.

The 15-year-old, known as Lan Hai (not his real name), lives in Yongchuan town, Chongqing, and suffers from congenital Ectodermal Dysplasia, the People's Daily Online reports.

According to his mother, Ma Yuxu, several of her families members also have the condition, which has resulted them being called the 'vampire family' by neighbours.

The disease has affected Lan Hai's hair and teeth.

Apart from only having two pegs for teeth, his hair is sparse and he is sensitive to light.

The boy said due to his appearance, he had been constantly laughed at by his playmates and classmates.

He says his only wish is to have teeth implants in order to improve his quality of life, however his family can't afford the treatment costs.



His mother, Ma Yongxu, spoke to local reporters on Tuesday at the Southwest Hospital of Third Military Medical University in Chongqing while she was taking Lan Hai for treatment.

Ma said when Lan Hai was born in 2001, the midwives were shocked.

She added: 'They thought the boy looked so strange because there was not a single hair on his head.'



According to Ma, the disease seems to be genetic.

Her youngest brother also suffers from Ectodermal Dysplasia and among all the children of her seven siblings, four of them including Lan Hai have the symptoms.

Ma said in her hometown Xuyong County in Luzhou, all neighbours were afraid of her siblings and relatives and have called them the 'vampire family'.



Because of the state of Lan Hai's teeth, Ma has to feed him with liquid foods leading to signs of malnutrition. His best option is a teeth implant.

According to his mother, Lan Hai spent most of his childhood in hospital being treated for fevers and sensitivity to light.

She says that by the time he hit his second birthday, he only had two pegs for teeth.

When he was just four years old, he was hospitalised for a fever and doctors told Lan's parents that he wouldn't survive.

It was discovered that the boy does not have sweat glands.

Without sweat glands, he cannot control his body temperature and risks suffering a fatal seizure if his body overheats or gets too cold.



His father installed a tank in a shaded area of their yard so that he could keep cool during the summer months.

When Lan Hai was five, his father became ill and later passed away. Before he died, he made his wife promise that she would not abandon the boy.

In 2009, his mother remarried and in 2013 she gave birth to another boy. Unfortunately the baby had the same disease and died within six months from a fever.

Her new husband couldn't cope and later disappeared leaving Lan Hai and his mother to fend for themselves. She makes money by running a late night food stand.



The boy says sometimes people's stares are hard to deal with and affect his self confidence. He says that if he had new teeth then it would make him more

confident.

Ectodermal dysplasias are a group of 150 inherited disorders that are estimated to affect just 7,000 people worldwide.

WHAT IS ECTODERMAL DYSPLASIA?

Ectodermal dysplasias (ED) are a group of 150 inherited disorders that involve defects in the hair, nails, sweat glands and teeth.

When a person has at least two types of abnormal ectodermal features - for example, malformed teeth and extremely sparse hair -the individual is identified as being affected by ectodermal dysplasia.

All ectodermal dysplasias are heritable or genetic disorders, which means that they can be inherited or passed on to children.

However, it is possible for a child to be the first person in his or her family to be affected by an ectodermal dysplasia.

In that case, the condition likely has been caused by a change in the DNA or a genetic mutation.

The faulty gene affects the development of the ectoderm, one of the three primary germ layers in the very early embryo.

The ectoderm contributes to the formation of the lens of the eye, parts of the inner ear, the fingers and toes, and nerves, among others. Therefore, ectodermal dysplasia may cause these parts of the body to develop abnormally.

Symptoms range from mild to severe. Only in rare cases does ectodermal dysplasia affect lifespan and very few types involve learning difficulties.

There are no cures for ectodermal dysplasias, but many treatments are available to address the symptoms.

Source: National Foundation for Ectodermal Dysplasias

Comments (2)

Coxon Brewster, Sydney, Australia, 4 days ago

He should use it to his advantage and scare the tripe out of the kids that give him a hard time.

Bev Burrows, Hull, United Kingdom, 4 days ago

Poor kid/family. I hope they get help now their plight has been publicised! And DM, why have you blurred out his eyes?

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Chorti mythical creature: Myth Beasts

mythicalcreatureslist.com

A huge wild man with clawed reversed feet who apparently lives in Central America and is found in the beliefs of the Yaqui people of Mexico and the tribes of Guatemala.

Chorti is a type of Bigfoot believed by some skeptics to be a living prehistoric man however the reversed feet are quite peculiar. Also it has metal clawed hands making the monster more fabulous than the common Bigfoot.

It lives in deep caverns and heavily wooded areas in the most remote places of the wilderness. It has a love for nature and as such the tribal people believe it to be the guardian of the wilderness like Pan or Cerunnos in Greek and Celtic folklore.

However despite its usual amiable nature, the Chorti can be quite dangerous. It will use its metal claws if need be but generally it is a creature of bad luck. The tribes claim that even to see one will bring about much misfortune to you. It feeds mainly on people and it is known to drink the blood of its victim before devouring the flesh.

The name Chorti is also used for a group of people in Guatemala and Honduras. However their name is spelt Ch'orti'.

Chorti has been viewed 6818 times.

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© Copyright 2011 - 2014 MythBeasts Chorti Background Illustrations (Left top-bottom, right top-bottom): Medusa by Gonzalo Ordonez , Loch Ness Monster by dyb , Basilisk by JustMick , Shuck by Serphire , Ts Um A Kas - Illustration of a rock painting (from Dover publications).

Clipping the Church and the Customs and Traditions of Mothering Sunday

blogspot.com



Dark Dorset Online Scrapbook is an archive of current and past events relating to local history, folklore and mysteries that can be discovered in the English county of Dorset.

Sunday, 6 March 2016

Church Clipping



Church of St. Laurence, Upwey, near Weymouth

The custom of 'Clipping the Church' as it is called, is a dance-like ceremony in which the parishioners join hands and move around the outside of the church in an unbroken ring often singing a traditional clipping hymn. The word "clipping" is Anglo-Saxon in origin, and is derived from the word "clyp-pan", meaning "embrace" or "clasp" and thus is an expression of devotion to the Mother Church, although the tradition is sometimes held on Easter Monday or Shrove Tuesday. As is so often the case with traditions like this, Clipping the Church finds its origins in pagan times and has probably descended from the Spring Equinox festivals. Currently, there are only a few churches left in England that hold this ceremony like St. Peter's Church, Edgmond, and St. Mary's Church in Painswick.



Clipping the Church' at Upwey in 1970

The Church of St. Laurence at Upwey also revived this tradition in 1962. An account of this custom was featured in a local newspaper 'Why they are 'Clipping' the Church', March 1970.

"The Mothering Sunday Celebration, pictured above is called Clipping the Church and was performed at Upwey Parish Church, Weymouth, yesterday for the eighth year after the revival of the tradition.

The Rector, the Rev. A. Leslie Jones, explained that the ceremony arose from an Epistle in the Bible which referred to the Church as the "mother of us all." The tradition was an "embracing" of the mother on the fourth Sunday in Lent.

About 100 people attended a short service before the ceremony which posies brought by the children were blessed and presented to their mothers.

Then the congregation went outside, linked arms and walked or danced around the church."

An earlier revival in nearby Preston featured a Clipping the Church ceremony in the Dorset Evening Echo 8th March 1961.

"The ancient custom of "Clipping the Church" was observed at the picturesque village church of St Andrew's at Preston, Weymouth, yesterday – Mothering Sunday.

The ceremony was revived nine years ago, is intended to symbolise the family character of the Christian church. The church was nearly filled and the service conducted by the new Vicar, Canon W. J. Smith, assisted by the Rev E.V. Tanner.

Children and their parents filed out of the main door, headed by the choir and joined hands to completely surround the church.

Moving round it continuously they sang the hymn "All things bright and beautiful."

Furmity

Dorset Folklorist, John Symonds Udal wrote about the traditions of Mothering Sunday (Mid-Lent Sunday) in Dorset in his book 'Dorsetshire Folklore' published in 1922:-

"Without attributing to Dorset folk the ideas of some old writers in giving this name to the fourth Sunday in Lent, namely, that whilst Roman Catholicism was the established religion in England it was customary for people to visit their Mother church on Mid-Lent Sunday and to make their offerings at the high altar, (See Brand, i, 92.) yet there are traces of a less ecclesiastical practice that at one time prevailed in some parts of the county at this time. The eating of "furmity" (fr. frumentum) a dish composed of steeped wheat, milk, currants, spice, etc. and boiled together—whether at the house of parents whom it was usual in some parts of England to visit on this day and to take them some little present of nice eatables, or otherwise—was customary at this time to some extent in Dorsetshire. We have the authority of the late Sir Frederick A. Weld, K.C.M.G.—at one time Prime Minister of New Zealand and, later, Governor of the Straits Settlements—for saying (Notes and Queries, Ser. v, v. 78) that in his own home at Chideock, in West Dorset, "furmity" made of boiled wheat and raisins, was eaten on their village feast day. I myself, many years ago, accepted some of this savoury dish at the hands of an old West Dorset lady, now dead, at this time of the year.

I have had no support from any Dorset source for the suggestion of certain scriptural writers (8 See Brand, i, p. 93 (n.). that this eating of "furmity" on Mothering Sunday may have taken its rise from the miraculous "feeding of the five thousand" by our Saviour as recorded in the Gospel for that day, or, perhaps, from the entertainment by Joseph of his brethren as related in the first lesson."

Extract taken from the *Chambers Book of Days* March 6th 1864, details the tradition of Mother's day.

MIDLENT, OR MOTHERING SUNDAY

In the year 1864 the 6th of March is the fourth Sunday in Lent, commonly called Midlent Sunday. Another popular name for the day is Mothering Sunday, from an ancient observance connected with it.

The harshness and general painfulness of life in old times must have been much relieved by certain simple and affectionate customs which modern people have learned to dispense with. Amongst these was a practice of going to see parents, and especially the female one, on the present, such as a cake or a trinket. A youth engaged in this amiable act of duty was said to go a-mothering, and thence the day itself came to be called Mothering Sunday. One can readily imagine how, after a stripling or maiden had gone to service, or launched in independent housekeeping, the old bonds of filial love would be brightened by this pleasant annual visit, signalised, as custom demanded it should be, by the excitement attending some novel and perhaps surprising gift. There was also a cheering and peculiar festivity appropriate to the day, the prominent dish being furmety—which we have to interpret as wheat grains boiled in sweet milk, sugared and spiced. In

the northern parts of England, and in Scotland, there seems to have been a greater leaning to steeped pease fried in butter, with pepper and salt. Pancakes so composed passed by the name of carlings: and so conspicuous was this article, that from it Carling Sunday became a local name for the day.

'Tid, Mid, and Misera,
Carling, Palm, Pase-egg day,'

remains in the north of England as an enumeration of the Sundays of Lent, the first three terms probably taken from words in obsolete services for the respective days, and the fourth being the name of Midlent Sunday from the cakes by which it was distinguished.

Herrick, in a canzonet addressed to Dianeme, says

I'll to thee a simnel bring,
'Gainst thou go a-mothering:
So that, when she blesses thee,
Half that blessing thou'lt give me.'



Simnel Cake

He here obviously alludes to the sweet cake which the young person brought to the female parent as a gift: but it would appear that the term 'simnel' was in reality applicable to cakes which were in use all through the time of Lent. We are favoured by an antiquarian friend with the following general account of Simnel Cakes.

It is an old custom in Shropshire and Herefordshire, and especially at Shrewsbury, to make during Lent and Easter, and also at Christmas, a sort of rich and expensive cakes, which are called Simnel Cakes. They are raised cakes, the crust of which is made of fine flour and water, with sufficient saffron to give it a deep yellow colour, and the interior is filled with the materials of a very rich plum-cake, with plenty of candied lemon peel, and other good things. They are made up very stiff; tied up in a cloth, and boiled for several hours, after which they are brushed over with egg, and then baked. When ready for sale the crust is as hard as if made of wood, a circumstance which has given rise to various stories of the manner in which they have at times been treated by persons to whom they were sent as presents, and who had never seen one before, one ordering his simnel to

be boiled to soften it, and a lady taking hers for a footstool. They are made of different sizes, and, as may be supposed from the ingredients, are rather expensive, some large ones selling for as much as half-a-guinea, or even, we believe, a guinea, while smaller ones may be had for half-a-crown. Their form, which as well as the ornamentation is nearly uniform, will be best understood by the accompanying engraving, representing large and small cakes as now on sale in Shrewsbury.

The usage of these cakes is evidently one of great antiquity. It appears from one of the epigrams of the poet Herrick, that at the beginning of the seventeenth century it was the custom at Gloucester for young people to carry simnels as presents to their mothers on Midlent Sunday (or Mothering Sunday).

It appears also from some other writers of this age, that these simnels, like the modern ones, were boiled as well as baked. The name is found in early English and also in very old French, and it appears in mediæval Latin under the form *simanellus* or *siminellus*. It is considered to be derived from the Latin *simile*, fine flour, and is usually interpreted as meaning the finest quality of white bread made in the middle ages. It is evidently used, however, by the mediæval writers in the sense of a cake, which they called in Latin of that time *artocopus*, which is constantly explained by *simnel* in the Latin-English vocabularies. In three of these, printed in Mr. Wright's Volume of Vocabularies, all belonging to the fifteenth century, we have '*Hic artocopus, anglice symnelle*,' '*Hic artocopus, a symnylle*,' and '*artocopus, anglice a symnella*;' and in the latter place it is further explained by a contemporary pen-and-ink drawing in the margin, representing the simnel as seen from above and sideways, of which we give below a fac-simile.

It is quite evident that it is a rude representation of a cake exactly like those still made in Shropshire. The ornamental border, which is clearly identical with that of the modern cake, is, perhaps, what the authorities quoted by Ducange v. *simila*, mean when they spoke of the cake as being *foliata*. In the Dictionaries of John de Garlande, compiled at Paris in the thirteenth century, the word *simineus* or *simnenels*, is used as the equivalent to the Latin *placentæ*, which are described as cakes exposed in the windows of the hucksters to sell to the scholars of the University and others. We learn from Ducange that it was usual in early times to mark the simnels with a figure of Christ or of the Virgin Mary, which would seem to shew that they had a religious signification. We know that the Anglo-Saxon, and indeed the German race in general, were in the habit of eating consecrated cakes at their religious festivals. Our hot cross buns at Easter are only the cakes which the pagan Saxons ate in honour of their goddess Eastre, and from which the Christian clergy, who were unable to prevent people from eating, sought to expel the paganism by marking them with the cross.

It is curious that the use of these cakes should have been preserved so long in this locality, and still more curious are the tales which have arisen to explain the

meaning of the name, which had been long forgotten. Some pretend that the father of Lambert Simnel, the well-known pretender in the reign of Henry VII, was a baker, and the first maker of simnels, and that in consequence of the celebrity he gained by the acts of his son, his cakes have retained his name. There is another story current in Shropshire, which is much more picturesque, and which we tell as nearly as possible in the words in which it was related to us. Long ago there lived an honest old couple, boasting the names of Simon and Nelly, but their surnames are not known. It was their custom at Easter to gather their children about them, and thus meet together once a year under the old homestead.

The fasting season of Lent was just ending, but they had still left some of the unleavened dough which had been from time to time converted into bread during the forty days. Nelly was a careful woman, and it grieved her to waste anything, so she suggested that they should use the remains of the Lenten dough for the basis of a cake to regale the assembled family. Simon readily agreed to the proposal, and further reminded his partner that there were still some remains of their Christmas plum pudding hoarded up in the cupboard, and that this might form the interior, and be an agreeable surprise to the young people when they had made their way through the less tasty crust. So far, all things went on harmoniously; but when the cake was made, a subject of violent discord arose, Sim insisting that it should be boiled, while Nell no less obstinately contended that it should be baked.

The dispute ran from words to blows, for Nell, not choosing to let her province in the household be thus interfered with, jumped up, and threw the stool she was sitting on at Sim, who on his part seized a besom, and applied it with right good will to the head and shoulders of his spouse. She now seized the broom, and the battle became so warm, that it might have had a very serious result, had not Nell proposed as a compromise that the cake should be boiled first, and afterwards baked. This Sim acceded to, for he had no wish for further acquaintance with the heavy end of the broom. Accordingly, the big pot was set on the fire, and the stool broken up and thrown on to boil it, whilst the besom and broom furnished fuel for the oven. Some eggs, which had been broken in the scuffle, were used to coat the outside of the pudding when boiled, which gave it the shining gloss it possesses as a cake. This new and remarkable production in the art of confectionery became known by the name of the cake of Simon and Nelly, but soon only the first half of each name was alone pre-served and joined together, and it has ever since been known as the cake of Sim-Nel, or Simnel!

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Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ Logo



Ridge Avenue, as it looks today.

EXCLUSIVE FAMILY INTERVIEW FOLLOWING ARTICLE!

Sometimes it's just too easy, folks. And, without question, the "Congelier Mansion" haunting is one of the most easily **deBUNKED!** Pennsylvania ghost stories we've come across.

Anyone who has Googled "Pennsylvania haunted houses" has likely (and quickly) found the various tales of the Congelier "Mansion" formerly located at 1129 Ridge Avenue in Pittsburgh. In good, old, "haunted house" fashion it's sometimes referred to as the most haunted house in America and even "the house that hell built."

The plot lines vary a bit but the primary... er... "facts"... of the case involve a rich carpetbagger named Charles W. Congelier (who theoretically built the mansion), his "Mexican" wife Lyda and a maid named Essie. Supposedly, in 1871, Lyda discovered that her husband and the maid were having an affair and promptly stabbed Charles to death just before decapitating Essie. From here forward things get REALLY scary with railroad workers driven out of the house by a ghostly woman's screams, and a "Dr. Brunrichter" performing experiments on the severed heads of young women.

In one grand final twist, an heir of Charles W. Congelier somehow gets hold of the house and dies there on November 15, 1927 when it mysteriously explodes.

Now, let's get to the true facts of the matter:

- Ridge Avenue was located in an industrial, working class section of the city -clearly not the preferred locale of a "mansion."
- There are no Congeliers listed in any 1871 Pittsburgh public records that Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ reviewed.
- There are no newspaper accounts of a horrific murder - or headless corpses - at 1129 Ridge Avenue.
- There was a Charles W. Springer who lived at 1101 Ridge Avenue in the early 1900s - perhaps mistaken identity... or sheer coincidence?
- An explosion at a nearby gas facility presumably caused damage to buildings on Ridge Avenue - and in fact caused damage over a several mile radius. As a result many structures were torn down.
- This explosion did not happen on November 15, 1927 - that was instead the date that the Associated Press story detailing the accident was filed. It happened November 14, 1927 as anyone who actually reads the AP story can decipher.
- A Marie Congelier [see exclusive family interview below] was killed indirectly by the blast. She was standing over a washtub in her basement when a shard of flying glass cut a main artery in her leg. She left behind five children whom the AP story reported would be cared for by relatives. The newspaper does NOT say, however, if Marie lived at 1129 Ridge Avenue.
- In 1929 the residents of 1129 Ridge Avenue were documented as a barber named John Congelier and his wife "Louise." Are these the relatives the AP story says would be taking care of Marie Congelier's children...? Or, did the directory contain outdated information? Was "Louise" actually "Marie"? Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ has not yet uncovered enough information to make a determination. No further

mentions of the Congeliers were found after this 1929 entry.

There would be no better ghost story to recount while sitting around a campfire than that of the haunted Congelier Mansion. But, for ghost lore historians looking for more "paranormal" events, it's a real letdown.

As it turns out the "most haunted house in America" is as fictional as the man who supposedly built it.

UPDATE: October 2013

Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ was contacted by Jeff Steigerwald whose mother-in-law, Nancy McConnell, is the grand-daughter of the above-mentioned Marie Congelier. From this exclusive family interview we learn the following first-hand facts our readers will no doubt find fascinating:

- ♦ **The family's name did not originate as "Congelier" but rather as "Cancelliere." This change was prompted by the difficulty in pronouncing and spelling the actual surname.**
 - ♦ **"Marie's" true name was actually Mary and she was just 29 years old at the time of her death.**
 - ♦ **The Congelier home suffered no destruction from the explosion other than the shattered windows which produced the shard of glass that killed Mary.**
 - ♦ **As Hauntingly PENNSYLVANIA™ speculated, the John and Louise in the 1929 city directory were indeed the family members who assumed the role of raising Mary's five children.**
 - ♦ **When Louise took on the task of raising these children she was herself but a child at only 17 years old.**
- ♦ **The family moved from the Ridge Avenue home in the late 1950s.**

We are incredibly thankful to Jeff and Nancy for helping to further de-bunk and demystify the story of the "Congelier Mansion."

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Connecticut Navy base has a feral cat problem

yahoo.com

March 2, 2016 1:43 PM

AP

GROTON, Conn. (AP) — Feral cats are stalking a submarine base in Connecticut, and officials say anyone caught feeding the felines will face disciplinary action.

The Day reports (<http://bit.ly/1QLwrJj>) officials at the Naval Submarine Base in Groton have stepped up enforcement of a policy to not feed feral animals. Sailors who disobey could face a range of actions as outlined by the U.S. Code of Military Justice. Civilian workers also could be punished.


Associated Press

Base spokesman Chris Zendan says feral cats pose a public health threat and are also a risk to the base's operation.

Base officials previously reached out to local animal shelters and convened a "feral cat summit" last year to research solutions.

The cats have been spotted near where submarines are docked and there are many storage facilities.

Information from: The Day, <http://www.theday.com>

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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The mystery of 'crow funerals' solved

18:13 EST, 2 October 2015 |

dailymail.co.uk

Researchers say crows are trying to learn about potential dangers to their lives

The mystery of 'crow funerals' solved: Researchers say birds are trying to learn about potential dangers to their own lives - and remember threats for years

- **Birds gathered together around a dead crow to observe the situation**
- **Researchers wore latex masks to disguise their identities**
- **Birds can remember an animal or person seen with a dead crow**
- **Even remembered people standing near a hawk carrying a dead crow**

By Mark Prigg For Dailymail.com

Crows mourn their dead to try and learn about potential dangers to their own lives, researchers have found.

They found the birds can even remember an animal or person seen with a dead crow.

The birds were also able to easily distinguish between people of hawks carry dead crows and other birds.

Scroll down for video



HOW THEY DID IT

The study recorded the crow's behaviour when stuffed crows which appeared dead were introduced to areas where they were feeding.

They were exposed to three scenarios:

A masked person holding a dead crow

A masked person standing near perched hawk

A masked person standing near a perched hawk with a dead crow

'The funeral behaviour of crows is so widely observed, and people often asked about it - but we haven't known what was happening,' Kaeli Swift at the University of Washington, who led the research, told Dailymail.com.

The study recorded the crow's behaviour when stuffed crows which appeared dead were introduced to areas where they are feeding.

'I introduced one of my three dangerous scenarios: a masked person holding a dead crow, a masked person standing near perched hawk, and a masked person standing near a perched hawk with a dead crow.'

In all these cases the birds were taxidermy-prepared mounts.

'The masks were used to work out how the crows recognised people - I had different volunteers each week,' Swift said.

In 96% of cases, the response was the same.

'The discovering bird (usually the territory holder) would scold and typically attract 5-11 additional birds.

'The mob would stick around for 10-20 minutes, scolding loudly and gradually growing more silent and dispersing before all but the territory holders were left.'

Exposure to the dangerous stimuli would only last 30min, after which they were removed.



'I found that crows responded most strongly when they saw a person and a hawk with a dead crow as opposed to a person holding a dead crow or a person near a hawk,' said Swift.

'This tells us that context matters, and crows are most sensitive to dead crows when they're with familiar predators.

Even after 6 weeks, 38% of the 65 pairs eligible for all 6 tests continued to respond to the 'dangerous' person.



Previous research has found crows have an excellent memory for human faces, and Swift said the team have a pending publication on exactly how long they remember for, and said it is 'years'

She admits she was surprised by some of the results - in particular the fact crows learnt to recognise people simply standing near hawks.

'That was really surprising.'

Study reveals crows remember threats to their safety



CROWS ARE AS INTELLIGENT AS CHILDREN

Crows have a reasoning ability rivalling that of a human seven-year-old, research has shown.

Scientists came to the conclusion after subjecting six wild New Caledonian crows to a battery of tests designed to challenge their understanding of cause and effect.

In a 'water displacement task', crows worked out how to catch floating food rewards by dropping heavy objects into water-filled tubes.

They demonstrated an ability to drop sinking rather than floating objects, solid rather than hollow objects, to choose a high water level tube over one with low water level, and a water-filled tube over one filled with sand.

The birds' understanding of the effects of volume displacement matched that of human children aged between five and seven, scientists from the University of Auckland claimed.

Dr John Marzluff, of the University of Washington, has carried out previous studies in the area.

'Our findings add to the evolving view of large-brained, social and long-lived birds like crows being on a cognitive par with our closest relatives,' he previously said.

A team of scientists from the university exposed crows in Seattle to a 'dangerous face' by wearing a mask while trapping, banding and releasing birds at five sites.

Over a five-year period after the trapping had stopped, they found that the mask received an increasingly hostile response from birds in the area – suggesting that the captured birds had been able to warn others.

Dr Marzluff added: 'Because human actions often threaten animals, learning socially about individual people's habits would be advantageous.'

'The number of crows scolding the dangerous mask continued to increase for five years after trapping, as expected if social learning or social stimulation were present.'

'As we conducted trials, walking with the dangerous mask along the route, our actions presented opportunities for crows to observe or be stimulated by scolding.'

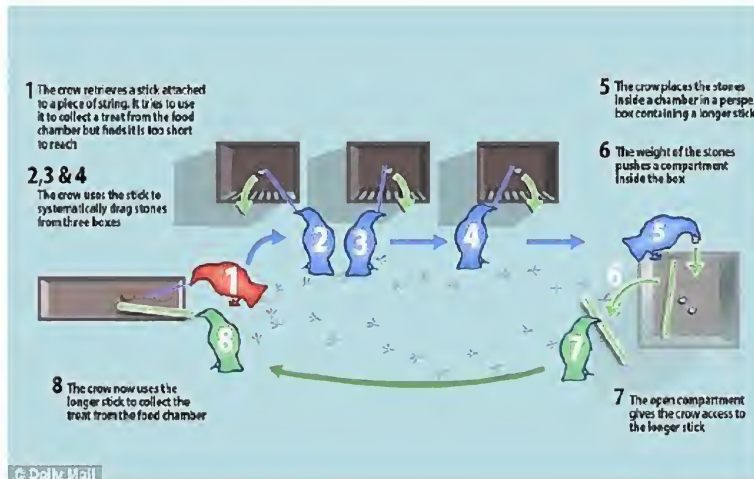
'The number of crows encountered was consistent across trials, but the number that scolded the dangerous mask increased steadily.'

MUCH SMARTER THAN THE AVERAGE BIRD BRAIN

Members of the crow family are known to be among the cleverest of birds, but scientists are finding that they may have intelligence that rivals most mammals and even young children.

An experiment by the University of Cambridge showed that crows can perform tasks that three and four-year-old children have difficulty with.

Scientists said that, while having very different brain structures, both crows and primates use a combination of mental tools, including imagination and the anticipation of possible future events, to solve similar problems.



Other experiments involving the same family of birds found that Caledonian crows can use up to three tools in sequence to obtain food.

A study also found rooks can use stones to raise the level of water in a vessel in order to bring a floating worm into reach.

Urban-living carrion crows have been witnessed learning to use road

traffic for cracking nuts.

The problem-solving creature performed the series of tasks without seeing the fiendishly difficult set up of the course beforehand.

The wild crow learned to use individual props during its three months of captivity but had to work out the order in which to use them to complete the challenge and get an inaccessible treat. The animal was later released.

In another astonishing test set up by BBC Two, a crow called 007 completed an eight stage puzzle in two and a half minutes.

It is one of the most complex tests of the animal mind ever devised.



Comments (123)

El loro loco, The Jungle, United States, 5 months ago

Corvids and psittacines are arguably the most intelligent creatures next to humans. Highly complex social structures, range of emotions, the ability to learn abstract concepts and a highly opportunistic nature. I think we could learn a lot about early human development by studying these birds.

Jetty, London, United Kingdom, 5 months ago

Slightly morbid perhaps? If you fell over and couldn't move for long enough these birds would land and peck out your eyes so I wouldn't go getting too chummy with them.

Granny58, PA, United States, 5 months ago

I've said for years that if crows had thumbs they would rule the world.

Maximus Augustus, Boston, United States, 5 months ago

Extremely intelligent birds, I love them

Lambert, S.Isidro, Spain, 5 months ago

I am happy to see how many people commenting are crow-friends! I think it's brilliant. When I lived in Lithuania there were majestic huge ravens all the time in winter. Now here there's none. :/

Foo, Matrix, South Georgia And The South Sandwich Islands, 5 months ago

Realistic face masks? Yeah, if you've been a mummy for a bout 3000 years.

ABC123, Essex, United Kingdom, 5 months ago

I just found out that someone built a box of food for birds----- But with one difference ----- The Crow must get a coin to drop it in and food comes out----- So far this man is making pennies----

JamesRussellJr, Thornley, United Kingdom, 5 months ago

Them masks tho...

Mimi, Syracuse NY, United States, 5 months ago

There are several cats in my neighborhood that all hang around together and lounge around the various backyards. One of the cats killed a crow one day during the early summer a couple of years ago. For the remainder of the summer, the other crows would dive-bomb that one cat, coming within inches of her back, sending her running for shelter. They knew and remembered exactly which cat was responsible for the death of their family member and friend. They are brilliant. In my city, the crows gather in the morning and evening for a group meal. There are thousands of them filling the skies. It is spectacular, Our backward city council and mayor "haze" them and try to drive them away. Very ignorant behavior toward fellow creatures with whom we share our home.

ThymeDyl, New South Wales, Australia, 5 months ago

Corvids are very fearless. There's a couple of magpies that like to visit my garden because I often place them food on the floor, I have seed sticks for the small bird away on a fence since

magpies are territorial. There was a cat who used to come to my garden until one day started walking on the fence and one of the magpies saw her, he started doing some loud noises, another one came and both bullied the cat so bad she never came back haha. Pretty much it's "their" garden. I was amazed they were not afraid of the cat at all, it was a really big one.

A808, Honolulu, United States, 5 months ago

Crows are incredibly intelligent. Wish we had one for POTUS instead of the raw deal we still have right now.

Vickie, Houston, United States, 5 months ago

Wish there were commenters more intelligent than crows.

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'Curse of the Iceman' Linked to Scientist's Death | Europe | DW.COM

| 06.11.2005

23.02.2016

dw.com

'Curse of the Iceman' Linked to Scientist's Death

The seventh person connected to the discovery of a prehistoric man found in the Alps has died, adding to the legend of a curse behind the ancient warrior.



Is Oetzi haunting his discoverers?

Is Oetzi haunting his discoverers?

That a 63-year-old man should die of natural causes would normally raise few eyebrows. But when that man was a scientist connected to the discovery of a 5,300-year-old frozen corpse known as Oetzi the Iceman -- and the seventh such person to die within a year -- talk about a curse is inevitable.

US-born molecular archaeologist Tom Loy was found dead in his Brisbane home two weeks ago as he was finalizing a book about Oetzi, according to *The Australian*

newspaper.

The director of the University of Queensland's archaeological sciences laboratories had suffered from a blood-related condition for about 12 years, members of his family told the paper. The condition was diagnosed shortly after he became involved with the Iceman.

Loy "didn't believe in the curse," a colleague told *The Australian*. "It was just superstition. People die."

Stone Age warrior

Oetzi was discovered high in the Italian alps near the Austrian border in 1991, and reports and pictures of the perfectly preserved Stone Age warrior sparked worldwide interest. But so did the murmurings about a curse, built around the theory that the Iceman was angry at being disturbed after 53 centuries.

The rumor of the curse began a year ago when the German tourist who discovered the mummy, Helmut Simon, 67, fell to his death during a freak blizzard while hiking near the same spot where he saw Oetzi through the ice.

Within an hour of Simon's funeral, the head of the mountain rescue team that was assigned to find him, Dieter Warnecke, 45, died of a heart attack. Then in April, archaeologist Konrad Spindler, 55, who first inspected the prehistoric corpse, died of complications from multiple sclerosis.

The head of the forensic team examining Oetzi, Rainer Henn, 64, died in a car crash on the way to give a lecture about the iceman. The mountaineer who led Henn to the Iceman's body, Kurt Fritz, 52, died in an avalanche, the only one of his party to be hit. And the man who filmed Oetzi's removal from his icy mountain grave, celebrated Austrian journalist Rainer Hoelzl, 47, died of a brain tumor.

He didn't die alone

Loy was renowned for discovering human blood on the Iceman's clothing and weapons. His work -- the subject of a National Geographic documentary in 2002 -- debunked the theory that Oetzi, age 30-45, died alone in the mountains after a hunting accident. By revealing four different types of human blood on Oetzi's clothing, he surmised that the Stone Age man was hunting with a companion when the pair got into a territorial skirmish.

Fatally wounded, Oetzi appears to have leaned against his companion for support.

These days, Oetzi rests in a refrigerated room at the South Tyrol Archaeological Museum in Bolzano, which attracts around 300,000 visitors a year and brings in \$5 million (4 million euros) in tourism.

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A NOVA SCOTIAN MYSTERY.

The Extraordinary "Possession" of a Young Girl—Pillows, Bedclothes and Other Articles Animated With Life—Peculiar Manifestations—Statements of a Physician and a Methodist Minister.

The Sackville (Canada) Borderer lately published a long account of extraordinary manifestations in the house of Daniel Teed, at Amherst, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia. The statement runs thus:

The occupants of the house are Mr. Teed, his wife and infant, Miss Esther Cox and Miss Jane Cox. The last named are sisters of Mrs. Teed, and are young women past twenty years of age. Miss Esther is the central figure in the story. She is undoubtedly possessed of a highly magnetic temperament, and would be called a powerful medium. Her health has been good, and she has lived until recently undisturbed by mysterious influences, and in ignorance of the theories or practice of spiritualistic mediums. Under ordinary conditions she might have lived so until the end of her life, but being ill and suffering from severe nervous prostration, accompanied by mental excitement, she became the instrument of the extraordinary developments hereafter mentioned. The first indication of any thing unusual was a mesmeric trance, by which she was overcome during her early illness, eight weeks ago. Dr. T. W. Carritt treated her so as to overcome her nervous prostration and bring the system nearest its normal condition. In this he was apparently successful, but her body continued surcharged with electricity to a very remarkable degree. One night she retired to bed with her sister Jane, and scarcely had she done so when a noise was heard in a paste-board box, containing scraps of cloths, which was under the bed. Little attention was paid to this, as it was supposed to be the work of a mouse, nor were the girls

TALKING MONGOOSE?

✦ ✦ ✦

✦ ✦ ✦

✦ ✦ ✦

✦ ✦ ✦

COMMONS MAY HAVE TO DECIDE

LONDON, Dec. 18—(P)—Is there a talking Mongoose in the Isle of Man?

Members of the House of Commons soon may be called upon to discuss that question when relations between the government and the British Broadcasting Corporation are debated.

The question already has led to a libel suit in which damages of £7,500 (\$37,500) were paid. The debate dates back to a book called "The Talking Mongoose," by Richard Stanton Lambert, editor of the B.B.C.'s review "The Listener," and one Harry Price.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Cecil Levita, former chairman of the London county council, dismissed the Manx ani-

mal's alleged linguistic talents with scorn and ridiculed Lambert's credulity.

Lambert thereupon filed suit for defamation of character and obtained a judgment for £7,500. He also charged persecution by the B. B. C., alleging officials of the company had urged him not to take action against Sir Cecil. Considerable controversy was aroused over this latter accusation and finally Prime Minister Baldwin named a commission to investigate.

The commission reported yesterday in favor of the B.B.C. but a number of members of parliament were not satisfied and indicated they would move for a debate on the matter. It was understood they would link their questions to those asking whether any of the cabinet had seen an advance copy of the speech broadcast last Sunday by the Archbishop of Canterbury, criticizing former King Edward and some of his friends.

Meanwhile the Mongoose is maintaining a dignified silence.

Oddities in The News

By United Press.

LONDON, Jan. 8.—(UP)—The "talking mongoose" has a rival in a singing mouse that lives in Devonport. Mrs. Annie Eddie reports he sings like a canary, but has evaded all her efforts to coax him into a trap from which he steals the cheese.

"Mickey"—that is his name—

"'Mickey'—that is his name—really has a beautiful voice and sings us to sleep," she said.



Doarlish Cashen, the farmstead, and Voirrey Irving.

CLUE TO MYSTERY OF "TALKING" WEASEL.

Schoolgirl May Have Powers of Ventriloquism.

FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.

DOES the solution of the mystery of the "man-weasel" of Doarlish Cashen lie in the dual personality of the 13-year-old girl, Voirrey Irving?

That is the question that leaps to my mind after hearing the piercing and uncanny voice attributed to the elusive little yellow beast with a weasel's body.



TALKING MONGOOSE? *** COMMONS MAY HAVE TO DECIDE

LONDON, Dec. 18.—Is there a talking mongoose in the file of lies?

Members of the House of Commons may be called upon to discuss that question when relations between the government and the British Broadcasting Corporation are debated.

The question already has led to a libel suit in which damages of £1,000 (\$17,000) were paid. The debate dates back to a book called "The Talking Mongoose," by Richard Winston Lambert, editor of the B.B.C.'s review "The Listener," and one Harry Price.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Cecil Lewis, former chairman of the London county council, dismissed the book's at-

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Meanwhile the mongoose is maintaining a dignified silence.

ISLE OF MAN'S "TALKING

News Chronicle 9th Nov. 1936
MONGOOSE REMARKABLE
PHOTOGRAPHS



"News Chronicle"
Nov. 9th, 1936

PROPERTY OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL
RESEARCH

DALBY SENSATION.

Uncanny Happenings at Farmstead.

Remarkable Story of Existence of
Phenomenal Creature.

Conversed With and Seen by Members
of Family.

Is It an Animal with Powers of Speech?

Exclusive Story told to the "Examiner"

'MAN-WEASEL'
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'Dalby Spook' mongoose mystery back in the spotlight

11:22Tuesday 19 January 201008:09Tuesday 12 January 2010

THE case of a Manx mystery which made headlines around the world is to reopen more than 70 years after the first claimed sighting.

Speculation has surrounded the case of the Dalby Spook — a talking mongoose called Gef — since a 13-year-old girl is said to have first seen it in 1931.

Now, Christopher Josiffe, a cataloguer at London University's Senate Library, is carrying out new research into the case and he is appealing for Islanders to help uncover the truth.

'I have never been able to decide whether Gef was a hoax, or a genuine — if unexplained — phenomenon,' he said.

'Accordingly, I would be very interested if any of your readers knew the Irving family.

'For instance, did they seem to be publicity-seekers or did they ever charge admission for visitors to Doarlish Cashen?'

>> The Story of Gef

Much research has already been carried out since the Irving family, living in a cottage at Doarlish Cashen, heard strange sounds coming from behind panelling in the house.

It is claimed James and Margaret Irving's daughter, Voirrey, befriended a creature with yellow fur, bushy tail and flat snout, and which introduced himself as 'Gef, an extra clever mongoose from Delhi'.

Gef could sing as well as talk and, with Voirrey's tuition, his vocabulary grew rapidly. He roamed the area to relate gossip back to the Irvings.

He had many traits linked to poltergeists — an uneven temper, was prone to throwing objects at people and made exaggerated claims about his powers.

Reports of Gef ended when the Irvings left Doarish Cashen in 1935.

The next owner, a Mr Graham, said he snared and killed a strange-looking animal.

Legendary paranormal investigator Harry Price was one of a number of researchers who travelled to the Island in the 1930s to probe the strange affair.

As part of his investigation, he had three pawprints made by Gef in plasticine and an impression of his teeth marks evaluated by the Natural History Museum, but they were not matched to any animal.

Mr Price failed to come to any conclusion as to the truth or otherwise of the sightings.

Part of Mr Josiffe's job involves cataloguing books for the Harry Price Library of Magical Literature.

His interest in the case was aroused after looking at the books, letters, photos and other material contained in the library and its archives.

In fact, there is so much material that he has not managed to work his way through the whole collection yet.

He said: 'An interview with Voirrey Irving in the 1970s indicated that she still maintained Gef to have been genuine, but that he had not brought good luck to her family and she rather wished he had not come to stay with them.

'My impression, from reading the archived material, is that the Irvings did not benefit from the publicity; rather, that they were disturbed by gangs of sightseers who made their lives a misery.

'It has been suggested that the whole episode was an elaborate hoax perpetrated by the daughter, Voirrey — but I cannot imagine that she could have hoaxed her father and mother, both of whom seem perfectly sincere in their belief in Gef.

'James Irving, the father, sent Harry Price a diary consisting of Gef's activities over several years.'

He added: 'I am inclined to regard the case as a poltergeist manifestation, similar in some ways to, for instance the Enfield Poltergeist case in the 1970s — objects being hurled around, knocking and scratching sounds, a voice which begins by just making animal noises but quickly "learns" human speech.

'In both cases a teenage girl was the focus for the events.'

Mr Josiffe plans to gain enough information to give a lecture on the subject at Treadwells, a bookshop specialising in cultural history and esoteric belief, in London's Covent Garden.

He said: 'I realise that there will now be very few people still alive who are able to recall these events, given that they took place in the 1930s.

'Accordingly, it may well be that my only hope of any recollections will be from people recalling what their parents told them.'

As part of his research he also hopes to visit the Island.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Christopher by emailing him at gef_investigation@hotmail.com

Voirrey Irving died in 2005 and Doarlish Cashen has been demolished.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send your comments to newsviews@newsiom.co.im

YOUR COMMENTS

It was a hoax – now leave me alone. Thanks

GEF

They are going to carry out research on this? Dear God what next? Gangs of academics coming over to see if there really are Fairies at the Fairy Bridge. Can the Isle of Man distance itself from these nutters please? We are already thought of as weird by the rest of the world.

CATTY

Hi Of course Gef was real and why not, I watch and listen to Meerkats advertising their website on the television most nights!!! Regards

PETER

I am Gef, hear me roar!!!!

JACK THE DANCING FISH

The Dalby Spook is alive and well and living in the office of the Isle of Man Tourist Board.. On regular occasions he takes a trip up to the House of Keys and haunts Tony Brown.

A. HAUNTING

Ah yes. This will be that very same bunch of scientists, no doubt, who after spending several months and thousands of pounds on analysing the bones of the Tower of London's lions concluded that they were originally from Africa. They'll be telling us that smoking is bad for you next!

STEVE

GEF was my cousin, he was a very intelligent member of our family who rose to fame as the President of the United States after he left the Island because nobody was taking him seriously, even the fairies though that he was a fake. May I suggest that rather than investigate my family members, perhaps the scientists would be better employed if they examined the MHK's to see if there was any truth in the rumour that they all originate from the human species.

RIKKI TIKKI TAVI.

He is here, alive and kicking (but only just)....

DALBY RESIDENT

Aw poor ole spook - about time he stood for Chief Minister aWOOOOoooo

:- o

A. HAUNTING and W.H.A TAFRIGHT

I believe Gef was an authentic animal, and that the family's experience was authentic. In India, this animal was probably exposed to the spiritual companion aspect (this is what most poltergeists

are) of older children and young teens through contact with them.

Effectively, this turned Gef into a kind of medium, which could 'channel' the spirit-companion of the teen. Our modern stories about identity and 'reality' are largely nonsense, however sophisticated they may appear. And yes, in such a situation, the girl would eventually discover that this relationship was unwholesome, in part because the animal is not being allowed to be an animal, and is instead a vessel for a not-entirely-human relational capacity which many teens encounter but cannot explain. Very young children, however, are keenly aware of these circumstances, and their meanings and purposes.

ORGANELLE

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Dark cloud remains over Donner Party's Keseberg |

TahoeDailyTribune.com

Gordon Richards Back to: News November 11, 2004 Submit Your News

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Dark cloud remains over Donner Party's Keseberg

This time of the year, attention turns to the onset of winter. With the early snowstorms we've had, many people think of the Donner Party tragedy that occurred here in 1845-46 at Alder Creek and Donner Lake. What would you have done to keep yourself and your family alive in those conditions? The issue of cannibalism is a sensitive one, but also a central part of the Donner Party story. One of the survivors of the incident who would be accused of the most blatant cases of cannibalism was Louis Keseberg. A living history presentation of Keseberg's side of the story, portrayed by David Fennimore of University of Nevada, Reno, will be presented by the Donner Memorial State Park, The Bookshelf at Hooligan Rocks, and the Friends of the Truckee Library tonight, Friday, Nov. 12, at 6:30 p.m. at Donner Memorial State Park.

Setting the stage As the Breen, Reed, Murphy, Graves and other families arrived at what was then called "Truckee Lake" on Oct. 31, 1846, they were already short on food supplies. The Donners were stranded on Alder Creek about eight miles northeast. Several party members had already gone ahead to secure more food from John Sutter of Sutter's Fort. Their animals were in poor condition, and the men of the group were already near exhaustion from the trials of traveling halfway across the North American continent.

Johann Ludwig Christian Keseberg was born in Westphalia, Germany. He was 32 years old when he arrived with his family at the lake. He was an educated man who spoke three languages. He was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth Phillipine and their two children, Ada, 3, and Louis Jr., an infant less than 1 year old. The Keseberg family had recently emigrated from Germany. On the trail west, Keseberg is thought to have stolen a buffalo robe from a Sioux burial scaffold. He was also thought to have abused his wife. He also played a part in the abandonment and death of Mr. Hardcoop, who was left behind when he was too sick to continue.

Starvation at the lake Upon arriving at Truckee Lake, the Keseberg family built a lean-to on the side of the Breen family cabin. On Jan. 14, they moved into the Murphy cabin. Despite the move, infant Louis Jr. died on Jan. 24. When the first relief party arrived on Feb. 22, Mrs. Keseberg and their daughter, Ada, left with them. Louis Keseberg stayed behind again when the second and third party removed the remaining healthy women and children. The third relief party left behind five survivors, two at the lake camp, three at Alder Creek. Keseberg moved into the Murphy cabin, being the last person alive in the camp. When the fourth relief party arrived in early April, they found gruesome evidence of body parts having been recently consumed. Evidence also pointed to one survivor being the perpetrator. When the relief party went to the Donner Camp on Alder Creek, the same situation was encountered with fresh tracks leading back to the lake camp. Tamsen Donner had been left alive and relatively healthy when the third relief party left, with her dying husband George Donner. The fourth relief party had expected to find Tamsen Donner still alive at Alder Creek, but instead found that the remaining bodies had been cannibalized, with no sign of Tamsen Donner. A leftover piece of beef was still good but was untouched.

When the last relief party went back to the lake camp. They found Keseberg sitting in the middle of body parts. When asked what had become of the remaining survivors, he replied that they were all dead. No trace of Tamsen Donner was ever found, and Keseberg is said to have admitted to consuming her. The other lake camp survivor, Mrs. Murphy could not be located. Tamsen Donner was known to have \$500 in coins at the Alder Creek camp, but the fourth relief party at first could not find any of it. They did find \$225 in Keseberg's possessions, even though his wife told rescuers that there was no money there. He refused to admit taking the Donner money, though he did have other Donner valuables with him. Only when a rope was put around his neck did Keseberg relent, admitting that he had cached the remaining Donner money. He told the rescuers where to find it, and they returned with \$273. All through this time, even though the relief party had food supplies, Keseberg reportedly continued to eat the remains of the deceased victims.

On April 21, 1847, the last survivor of the Donner Party left with the fourth relief party. Keseberg put many of the remaining bones in a box and placed them in the Murphy cabin, blessed them, then asked for forgiveness. The trip was quick over the remaining snow, and despite his unusual diet for the past months, Keseberg was in good condition.

McGlashan interviews Keseberg Twenty-two years later, in April of 1879, Truckee journalist

Charles Fayette McGlashan interviewed a poverty-stricken Louis Keseberg as part of his research for writing "The History of the Donner Party." This book was the first attempt, and is still the best historical account of the Donner tragedy. Keseberg was living in Sacramento, after having been unsuccessful in many of his attempts to own and operate various businesses. McGlashan broke through the shroud of secrecy that Keseberg had kept for the years since the tragedy. He denied having killed Tamsen Donner, instead he praised the Donners and showed great respect even then. Keseberg said that after George Donner had died, Tamsen Donner had come to the lake camp in the middle of the night, intending to walk over the Sierra to get to her children. She agreed to wait until morning to continue. She refused to consume any human flesh, but talked extensively to Keseberg. During the night Keseberg said she died. At first, McGlashan was certain that Keseberg was telling the truth, as he later wrote the Donner surviving daughters. After comparing notes with other survivors and rescuers, he wasn't sure whether to believe all that Keseberg told him. Regarding Tamsen Donner's death, he still felt that Keseberg was telling the truth. There are still many unanswered questions regarding cannibalism and the Donner Party, some of which cannot be answered. Tonight David Fennimore will present a Keseberg interpretation of the events that occurred 158 years ago at Donner Lake. Come join the Friends of the Truckee Library, the Bookshelf at Hooligan Rocks, and Donner Memorial State Park at the park museum. There is no charge, but donations are encouraged. Gordon Richards is the research historian for the Truckee Donner Historical Society. Comments, story ideas, guest articles, and history information are always welcome. Please visit the Truckee Donner Historical Society Web site at <http://truckeehistory.tripod.com>. The e-mail address is tdhs@inreach.com. You may leave a message at 582-0893. Emigrant Trail Museum, Donner Memorial State Park Nov. 12, 6:30 8 p.m. UNR Professor David Fennimore as Lewis Keseberg of the Donner Party. In partnership with the Donner Memorial State Park and the Friends of the Truckee Library, Bookshelf at Hooligan Rocks invites you to a chautauqua/living history presentation. Fennimore has represented a variety of Chautauqua characters, from Woodie Guthrie to John Sutter and Zane Grey. Join us in the State Park setting for a look at one of the more controversial members of the Donner Party, Lewis Keseberg. Call Bookshelf at 582-0515 to reserve a seat, as space is limited for this unique opportunity.

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Death Ship: The Ourang Medan Mystery



34 Comments

November 29, 2011

Rob Morphy

<http://mysteriousuniverse.org/2011/11/death-ship-the-ourang-medan-mystery/>

Ominous tales of ghost ships like the Flying Dutchman and the Mary Celeste have been passed down from one generation of seafarer to the next for centuries, but as eerie as these haunted vessels are alleged to be there is another even more disturbing maritime phenomena that deals not with ships that have been abandoned, but those whose crew have mysteriously perished. Arguably the most disturbing of all these legends is the shocking case of the SS Ourang Medan.

According to widely circulated reports, in June of 1947 — or, according to alternate accounts, February of 1948 — multiple ships traversing the trade routes of the straits of Malacca, which is located between the sun drenched shores of Sumatra and Malaysia, claimed to have picked up a series of SOS distress signals. The unknown ship's message was as simple as it was disturbing:

"All officers including captain are dead, lying in chartroom and bridge. Possibly whole crew dead."

This communication was followed by a burst of indecipherable Morse code, then a final, grim message: "I die." This cryptic proclamation was followed by tomb-like silence.

the ship "teleport" to a place a long way away. The crew members have been ill since, however. 2 of them spontaneously combusted, resulting in deaths.

- Daniel TRS_40 • 2 years ago
USS Eldridge
- TRS_30 • 2 years ago
I highly doubt it was chemical poisoning that killed the crew....if that were the case, why wasn't the boarding party killed or at least sickened by it?? Also the way their faces and bodies looked suggest something very strange...
- Andrew Coll TRS_30 • 2 years ago
Maybe the chemical gas was in a separate store which they opened and let out and wasted away before the other crew got there and the nitro glycerine was disturbed by the boarding crew when they tugged the boat. Just a theory i am not an expert.
- Julius Bungulan Andrew Coll • 2 years ago
maybe after the gas evaporated after killing the crew and because of that the american crew who got in haven't got affected, right?
- Michael Maehle • 3 years ago
Assuming that any official records of the ship were destroyed, the next simplest way to verify whether the Ourang Medan existed is to consult the local newspapers of the time. The comings and goings of ships were reported in the "shipping news" columns of the local press of port towns (a practice that still continues to date). Consequently, a search of various port town newspapers for the months prior to the ship's disappearance should be able to shed light on whether such a vessel ever called at any of the ports in the vicinity. Since this is post WW2, the papers should still be readily available, even if only on microfiche.
- tim whitten Michael Maehle • 2 years ago
There is no newspaper article either...Thats troubling..I believe they were smuggling and seeing what the Jap scientist were up to...Sounds like occurs razor to me...
- connor • 3 years ago
thats pretty creepy
- Jordan Girtz • 3 years ago
I would love to have some divers try to go down and get photo evidence of this Ourang Medan
- Anders WellnessCoach Jordan Girtz • 2 months ago
Yeah! I actually wonder till this day, why such an attempt, was never executed..?!
- TRS_30 Jordan Girtz • 2 years ago
Psssh, you go and do it. I wouldn't go anywhere near that boat.
- Paul Miller • 3 years ago

i wish there were photos of the dead to go along with the story..... no one may ever know what really happened

- Chris Saunders • 3 years ago

Stories like this are hard to credit due to lack of reliable documentation. Generally all you get are secondhand accounts either relayed to the author by a none-too-credible source, or merely citing existing books. Since there's little evidence the Ourang Medan existed I'm inclined to believe the hoax explanation.

Bainton's article is interesting and I appreciate his research. But he really loses me with the conspiracy theorizing. Is it superficially plausible? Sure. But Bainton falls into the logical fallacy of arguing lack of evidence somehow constitutes evidence. Occam's razor suggests the ship not existing is more likely than a massive multinational cover-up.

Thanks very much for posting this though. It was an interesting read and I appreciate your commentary on it as well.

- Anders WellnessCoach Chris Saunders • 2 months ago

Don't worry, it IS real... Or was anyway.... there's pictures of the crew in their "frozen state" surfacing the web, if you search around for them.

- IndonesianMan • 3 years ago

I from Indonesia, ourang medan means "medan people" medan is a district in Sumatra.

- Kay • 4 years ago

Eyes open, faces distorted, arms up at ALL... sounds like a definite nerve agent to me if this ever happened at all.

- TheOneWho • 4 years ago

A large crew of Dutch sailors, everyone of them is dead. Their faces formed in horrific grimaces, arms outstretched, looks as if holding off an attacker, looks like murder or, possibly an acute electric shock which could account for the grimaces. A secret bio-weapon seems likely too, but maybe, just maybe a new weapon that can and does use electric impulses or anti-matter to destroy a human without damage to the outer form of the human. paranormal? E.T? not likely. gases? maybe, but remember this is just a few years after WW2, and on a moving ship. but remember there are always rats and other stowaway pests that carry serious and often deadly venoms, poisons and diseases.

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- MizzHarpy • 4 years ago
It's possible the horrible expressions on the victim's faces were due to rictus sardonius possibly caused by strychnine poisoning. Their contorted positions that looked as if they were fighting off an opponent would be due to seizures caused by the poison. I don't know much about poisons and toxins so there may be others but strychnine fits and does have plant sources. Maybe the crew was murdered?
- just interested • 4 years ago
How would carbon monoxide have killed the people in the open air. People who die of carbon monoxide poisoning tend to fall asleep and never wake up. I have never heard of anyone dying outside because the gas is not concentrated enough to kill. This might very well be just a folktale, but governments can do a lot to stop people from finding out what really is going on and who is involved. Those people from the Silver Star might have been paid off or told this would happen to them. I can actually believe the nerve gas theory. It has more credibility than some of the others. Good story.
- marcosanthonytoledo • 4 years ago
I had forgotten reading this story in Gaddis book that was many decades ago. Thanks for reminding me of this disturbing and chilling story. Just reading it creeps me out.

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THE SILVER STAR COMES TO THE RESCUE:

The chilling distress call was picked up by two American ships as well as British and Dutch listening posts. The men manning these posts managed to triangulate the source of these broadcasts and deduced that they were likely emanating from a Dutch freighter known as the SS Ourang Medan, which was navigating the straits of Malacca.

A conscripted American merchant ship called the Silver Star was closest to the presumed location of the Ourang Medan. Originally christened "Santa Cecilia" by the Grace Line (W. R. Grace & Co.), the vessel had been renamed the Silver Star when the United States Maritime Commission "drafted" it in 1946.



Noting the terrified urgency in the message that came over the airwaves, the Captain and crew of the Silver Star wasted no time in changing their course in an effort to assist the apparently incapacitated ship. Within hours, the Silver Star caught sight of the Ourang Medan rising and falling in the choppy waters of the Malacca Strait.

As the merchant craft neared the ill-omened vessel, the crew noticed that there was no sign of life on the deck. The Americans attempted to hail the Dutch crew to no avail. That's when the Captain of the Silver Star decided to assemble a boarding party. As they left the safe haven of the Silver Star, these unfortunate souls had no idea that they were about to walk into a living nightmare.

As soon as they boarded the Ourang Medan, the men swiftly realized that the distress calls were not an exaggeration. The decks of the vessel were littered with the corpses of the Dutch crew; their eyes wide, their arms grasping at unseen assailants, their faces twisted into revolting visages of agony and horror. Even the ship's dog was dead; its once intimidating snarl frozen into a ghastly grimace.



The boarding party found the Captain's remains on the bridge, while his officers' cadavers were strewn about the wheelhouse and chartroom. The communications officer was still at his post, as dead as the rest, his fingertips resting on the telegraph. All of the corpses, according to reports, bore the same terrified, wide-eyed expressions as the crew on deck.

Below deck, search party members found cadres of corpses in the boiler room, but almost as disturbing as this grim find was the fact that the American crew members claimed to have felt an extreme chill in the nadir of the hold, even though the temperature outside was a scorching 110°F. While the search

team could see clear evidence that the crew of the Ourang Medan suffered profoundly at the moment of their deaths, they could find no overt evidence of injury or foul play on the swiftly decaying corpses. Nor could they spy any damage to the ship itself.

The Captain of the Silver Star decided that they would tether themselves to the Ourang Medan and tow it back to port, but as soon as the crew attached the tow line to the Dutch ship they noticed ominous billows of smoke pouring up from the lower decks, in specific the Number 4 hold.

The boarding party scarcely had a chance to cut the towline and make it back to the Silver Star before the Ourang Medan exploded with such tremendous force that it “lifted herself from the water and swiftly sank.”

The crew watched the Dutch vessel disappear beneath the briny depths, no doubt breathing deep sighs of relief that the towline had not dragged them into the sea as well.

The watery grave that claimed the Ourang Medan effectively removed the freighter from the face of the Earth and forced it directly into the realm of myths and legends. This, of course, has made it one of the most enduring and intriguing maritime mysteries of the modern age, leaving us to ask the most basic question...



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OURANG MEDAN?

While rumors about the Silver Star’s grisly discovery circulated wildly along the trade routes of the East Indies, the first official account of the event would not be printed until May of 1952, in the form of the “Proceedings of the Merchant Marine Council,” which was published by the United States Coast Guard. The testimony therein described the alarming state of the Dutch crewmen, even going so far as to state:

“Their frozen faces were upturned to the sun... staring, as if in fear... the mouths were gaping open and the eyes staring.”



THE SHIP THAT NEVER WAS

The first problem with trying to ascertain what happened to this now infamous Dutch freighter is the fact that there doesn’t seem to be any official records that it ever existed in the first place. We know that the Silver Star was real — although, by 1947, it had been reacquired by the Grace Line shipping company who dubbed the vessel “Santa Juana” — but there’s no paper trail leading to the Ourang Medan.

Some researchers have speculated that if the Ourang Medan was a genuine ship that it likely hailed from Sumatra, which at the time was a colony of the Netherlands in what was referred to as the Dutch East Indies. "Ourang" is Indonesian for "man" and "Medan" is the biggest city on the island of Sumatra, which would designate this enigmatic freighter the "Man from Medan." But, while the etymology of the name might give some clue as to its origin, there are no bureaucratic records of the Ourang Medan.

Author and historian Roy Bainton, who's done some of the most exhaustive and revealing investigation on the subject of the SS Ourang Medan, met dead end after dead end in his pursuit of the true story of the "death ship." First he went to the usual sources, but was unable to find any mention of the ship in Lloyd's Shipping registers or the Dictionary of Disasters at Sea, 1824-1962.

Then he contacted the United Kingdom Admiralty, the Registrar of Shipping and Seamen and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich all of whom told him that the only place to check Dutch Shipping records was in Amsterdam. Bainton searched the Dutch records as well as the Maritime Authority in Singapore to no avail.

Just as he was about to give up his investigation and write the whole thing off as just an old sailors' yarn, Bainton was contacted by Professor Theodor Siersdorfer of Essen, Germany who had been pursuing the case for the better part of 50 years and was the first to reveal the names of the two American ships that had heard the Ourang Medan's SOS calls.

Siersdorfer also led Bainton to a 32 page German booklet written in 1954 by Otto Mielke, entitled "Das Totenschiff in der Südsee" or "Death Ship in the South Sea." Mielke seemed to know a lot about the Ourang Medan's route, cargo, tonnage and engine power and even, allegedly, the Captain's name. One is forced to wonder whether or not Mielke had contact with one of the Silver Stars' notoriously difficult to find crewmen.

Mielke's pamphlet was also the source of the June, 1947 date and added yet another compelling piece to the puzzle, which helped to reignited Bainton's interest in the project. This intriguing new bit of possible evidence was that the Number 4 hold of the Ourang Medan may have been filled with a pair of exceedingly lethal and highly illegal substances. According to Bainton:

"... there is a tantalizing, possible explanation as to her crew's demise and her disappearance from the records. Mielke mentions a mixed, lethal cargo on the Dutchman 'Zyankali' (potassium cyanide) and nitroglycerine."

Needless to say this would be a dangerous enough concoction in a laboratory with the highest safety protocols, but in a cargo hold on the rough seas it was a potential nightmare; one which might explain not only the inexplicable demise of the Dutch crew, but the subsequent explosion that claimed the freighter herself.

Even more terrifyingly, according to Bainton, is the conjecture that the Ourang Medan may have been smuggling nerve gas or even more insidious biological weapons manufactured by a sinister assembly of Japanese scientists whose experiments were so heinous that many of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazi's in the name of science pale by comparison. This diabolical faction was unassumingly referred to as...

UNIT 731:



Known to nearby inhabitants as a “den of cannibals,” Unit 731 was founded in 1932 by a brilliant, yet misguided, Japanese bacteriologist named Shirō Ishii.

The unit was designed to be a clandestine research and development department whose sole agenda was to create the most deadly forms of chemical and biological weapons known to man and thus insure the victory of the Japan over any potential enemy.

Ishii established Unit 731 (code named “Tongo Unit”) during the Second Sino-Japanese War, but didn’t really make his terrible mark until he oversaw the construction of new research facilities in the Imperial Japanese Army occupied Pingfang district of Harbin, China. It was there that the scientists of his division conducted some of the most deplorable biological experiments known to mankind during World War II.

Even more inexcusable was the fact that this grotesque cabal used human beings — including women and infants — in their appalling experiments, which included everything from exposure to sub-zero temperatures to the vivisection of human guinea pigs to study the effects of toxic materials on living organs.

Nevertheless, General Douglas MacArthur, presumably in the interest of national defense, covertly granted immunity to Ishii and his staff in exchange for providing the U.S. with their biological warfare research, regardless of the unspeakable acts they had committed — the magnitude of which was reported by Bainton:

“Unit 731’s brief was to find a chemical, gas or biological weapon to win the war. Hideous, inhumane experiments were carried out on helpless Australian, American, Russian, Chinese and British prisoners — some of the worst war crimes ever committed.”



As to why these hazardous materials were packed onto the Ourang Medan when they could have just flown it directly to a secretive laboratory, Bainton speculated that perhaps the U.S. government — or another world power — decided to use as slow and inconspicuous vessel as the Dutch freighter to transport such treacherous cargo for reasons of both safety and concealment:

“So how was this deadly cargo moved around the South China Sea and through the Straits of Malacca during this troubled period? Not by air; the prospect of a cargo plane crashing with several tons of deadly gas on board was too horrendous to consider. No, you hired an insignificant old tramp steamer, preferably with a low paid foreign crew, stowed the cargo in disguised oil drums and, like all serious smugglers, hoped for the best, and a blind eye from authority.”

Bainton surmised that sea water could have entered the ship's hold, reacting with the perilous cargo to release poisonous gases, which then caused the crew to suffocate. At this point the onrushing salt water might have reacted with the nitroglycerin, creating the explosive effect that was said to cause the ship's ultimate demise. Bainton even went on to speculate as to why the United States would go to such extreme lengths to expunge from all records the very existence of the freighter:

"If we accept, due to the nature of her crew's deaths, that she was carrying deadly gas or chemicals and if indeed she was a Dutch vessel had this news broken it would have been a major embarrassment for any government involved, especially in the light of the Geneva Convention. Hence the dead ends faced by any researcher. The story exists because, like the gases, it escaped."

So are we to believe that this was the ultimate fate of the Ourang Medan and her crew? Was this merely a tragic accident that was the result of a combining dangerous chemicals with nitroglycerine on rough seas? If this is a genuine account of what transpired, then it seems like it's as valid a possibility as any, but that doesn't mean it's the only option that researchers have come up with. Perhaps the strangest I've encountered is that the unfortunate crew was the victim of...

THE PARANORMAL:

In 1953, Frank Edwards and Robert V. Hulse retold the basics of the legend for Fate Magazine and in his 1955 book "The case For the UFO," astronomer, author and noted "Philadelphia Experiment" researcher, Morris K. Jessup, hypothesized that the crew of the Ourang Medan may have been attacked by extraterrestrials for reasons unknown.

Other Fortean enthusiasts have theorized that the unlucky Dutch crew may have had a Scooby Doo-like run-in with vengeful wraiths of the sea or a ghost ship full of surly, undead pirates. The dubious proof, which supporters of the paranormal option use to confirm their theory, is the evident lack of a natural cause for the deaths as well as the purportedly petrified expressions etched onto the faces of the doomed sailors. Add to this the unnatural chill in the cargo hold and the assertion that some of the deceased sailors were reaching up towards what was assumed to be an unknown adversary and you have all the ingredients for a hoary seafarers' tale.



This is scant evidence indeed for a supposed interaction with either evil aliens or malevolent phantoms, but one can hardly blame yarn spinning mariners for trying to add a little spice to a story told around campfires on stony shorelines to wide-eyed children... or even novice deckhands. So, if we presume for the moment that the paranormal is out then we must be dealing with...

NATURAL CAUSES:

Okay, assuming that the deaths aboard the Ourang Medan were caused by neither supernatural forces or

atrocious weapons of war then could it be a chilling natural phenomenon or even a simple accident that claimed the lives of these Dutch sailors'? Mayhap an incident involving...

METHAN BUBBLES



Perhaps the most fear-provoking theory proffered by those who believe that the demise of the Dutch freighter was explicable by natural means is that the crew of the Ourang Medan was asphyxiated by clouds of noxious methane that gurgled up from a fissure on the sea floor and poisoned the sailors before eventually engulfing the ship.

As terrifying as the thought of random bursts of methane destroying vessels after killing the crew may be, this explanation seems farfetched as it does not account for the thunderous blast described by the crew of the Silver Star. So if it wasn't methane bubbles that were responsible for the tragedy, then perhaps it was a...

BOILER FIRE

Author Vincent Gaddis, in his 1965 book "Invisible Horizons," put forward the premise that an unobserved fire or failure in the ship's boiler system might have been responsible for the demise of the vessel.

He claimed that carbon monoxide could have leaked up causing the deaths of all aboard while the fire slowly grew, eventually igniting the fuel and causing the craft to explode.

While this is a sound theory, perhaps the truth is even simpler than a fire or maintenance error and all of this is nothing more than a...



A HOAX



Despite Bainton's proposition that the records may have been eradicated by a savvy group of governmental conspirators, the fact that there are no registration records for the Ourang Medan remains a troublesome detail.

Combine this with the reality that no survivors of the Silver Star have ever felt compelled to come forward and tell their harrowing tale and you've got all the earmarks of a good, old fashioned ghost story concocted by sailors to while away the long hours at sea.

That having been stated, the fact that the United States Coast Guard seems to have confirmed the tale, and that

other noted nautical authors have invested so much time and so many resources in availing themselves of the truth, lends and aura of credibility to the whole proceeding.

CONCLUSION:

When all is said and done, if anyone really knows what happened to the Ourang Medan and her crew then they're not talking, but whatever the truth is behind this unfathomable tragedy, it remains one of the most perplexing and downright scary maritime enigmas of the 20th Century... and while it might not be as famous as the plethora of other ghost ships said to sail the high seas, it is every bit a terrifying.

34 Comments

- BW • 4 months ago

Hmm. This story got mention in Brad Steiger's Atlantis Rising, right next to a claim that a small ship from Tarawa named the Arakarimoa went missing in 1955. Perhaps Steiger did not know the full story, but Arakarimoa -was- found, with survivors, in March 1956 -- aground near Guadalcanal . Despite the tune-up of the motors described in Steiger's book, the Arakarimoa suffered engine trouble and then drifted for some -two months- before grounding in the Solomon Islands. One "mystery" solved, makes me wonder if there is anything at all to the Ourang Medan story.

- Jean Peter • 7 months ago

Methane hydrates? The 2nd source talks about a scenario where, if hit correctly by the Methane bubble, a ship could go virtually unscathed whilst killing everybody on board. Cause of death: asphyxiation.

Just a theory.

<http://www.science-frontiers.c...>

<http://www.salem-news.com/arti...>

- William Loxley • 8 months ago

I'm sure there are many who will disagree with me, but personally none of the "asphyxiation" causes are logical. The boarding party would have come upon corpses with bluish-coloured lips, pale/greyish complexion and other obvious signs of suffocation. Also, there are other apparent signs of asphyxiation caused by chemicals as opposed to merely a lack of oxygen in the environment, that would have been noted. Instead, we are left with a description of (1) a look of horror on the faces of the bodies, (2) grasping for something/fending something away and (3) a "snarling" dog. For one thing, dogs usually don't tend to look angry or "snarly" <grin> when suffocating. Also, when one needs air he/she tends to grasp at his/her throat or mouth, not *away* from the throat. Finally, if we are to believe the "chemical" theory, it only makes sense that the government of the conspiratorial country would have hired a safer ship than a "tramp steamer" with a "low-paid crew". Even if they didn't tell the crew (or even Captain) of the cargo, they would have wanted a newer, safer ship and crew that are unlikely to be involved in anything but standard operating procedures, something you probably won't

find with cheap, foreign crews. Anyway, just my opinion. =) I certainly believe the story *did* happen, but I don't buy any suffocation or government conspiracy story, except perhaps for the part of the government destroying documents, which they would have done no matter what happened (at least if it was one of the above theories).

- Victor Garcia • a year ago
where did the sos messages and morse code come from?
- shadowguy14 • a year ago
So they were carrying chemicals? I bet at least 1 was a gas, and got released, and made everyone hallucinate and eventually killed them.
- William Loxley shadowguy14 • 8 months ago
Actually we don't know what they were carrying. Chemicals is just one guess
- Mikki • 2 years ago
Anybody blame Bush yet?
 - Your Name Mikki • a year ago
nope just dumb white people
- Cellar Door • 2 years ago
wow! indeed a mystery still...
- Julius Bungulan • 2 years ago
the chemical killing the entire crew is the best possible reason, the fact that the american crew didn't got affected was that the chemical possibly evaporated into thin air and became harmless, or else it was the "chill" the american's felt inside the dutch vessel.. and maybe after the crew died, without functioning the vessel, the gear malfunctioned causing it to explode.. just another theory =D
- Mike Sanchez • 2 years ago
I have been reading a book I downloaded from the Amazon website called 'Strange Things Happen at Sea' by MC Hopkins in which the author has discovered a common and ordinary cargo which could cause these exact effects including the big explosion. He/she has done the research very well and has probably solved a few of these 'unsolvable' mysteries.
Well worth a look.
- TroliusMaximus • 2 years ago
I'm going with the Martians theory.
- Love Bou You TroliusMaximus • 2 years ago
Yes, they came again with the mysterious disappearance of MH370.
- TRS_40 • 2 years ago
the Philadelphia experiment was nothing like that,
The ship, I cannot recall its name, was put under rays of high voltage electricity, making

Demonic weaves believed to be root of hair crimes

MEMPHIS, TN (WMC) -

nbc12.com

Wednesday, March 2nd 2016, 2:32 pm PST Thursday, March 3rd 2016, 10:28 am PST

By Jerica Phillips

jphillips@wmcvtv.com



(Source: WMC Action News 5)

Thieves have killed four people while trying to steal hair weaves and products, and now many Memphians say demonic spirits could be to blame.

• Thursday, February 25 2016
7:18 PM EST 2016-02-26
00:18:13 GMT Feb 25, 2016 4:18 PM PST
Feb 25, 2016 4:18 PM PST

The price of beauty should never amount to someone's life, but Memphis is seeing a spike in crimes related to the hair business.

The price of beauty should never amount to someone's life, but Memphis is seeing a spike in crimes related to the hair business.

It is a theory that's taking on a life of its own online.

Search the words "cursed hair" on the web and the prophecies are plenty.



(Source: WMC Action News 5)

"Whose-ever hair I was wearing on my head, that heifer had a bad omen and that bad omen followed her from India and came on top of my head, and I took on her spirit," one woman said on YouTube.

After a WMC Action News 5 investigation revealed how deadly the business of selling hair in Memphis can be, Mid-South women let loose on Facebook.

Weave wearers went back and forth about what some believe to be the root cause of the crimes.

One woman wrote: "Do you know the history of the hair's original owner? What type of spirit did that person have? You may be buying a person's hair and their demonic spirit."

Another woman wrote: "Maybe the reason so many people are doing ungodly things has a lot to do with the fact that many of the purchases are made in other countries that worship false gods."

It may sound bizarre, but some people believe virgin hair from India may be possessed during a ritual called tonsuring, the cutting of hair for religious reasons, or sacrifices to idol Gods.

"The bible has no reference to demonic possession of things or objects," said Dr. Bill Adkins, pastor at Greater Imani Cathedral of Faith.

Dr. Adkins is doubtful demons would possess weaves and wigs.

"That's not from Christian doctrine. That's from animistic beliefs, animism from Africa, from the Caribbean, voodoo, religions and cults that practice this concept of evil spirits taking possession of evil things," Adkins said.

Robin Ransom wears and professionally installs human hair.

She admits a new hair-do can bring out a new attitude in women.

"They'll come in and get a long hair installed and when I turn them in the mirror it's more like a "OK girl," but never have I sensed or seen an evil spirit in hair," she said.

Facebook users offered their remedy for devil weave.

One women wrote: "I personally pray over everything I purchase."

Ransom said if a client preferred to pray over bundles they bought, she'd allow it.

"It would be a little weird to me, but if they wanted to pray on their hair then pray on," she said. "If that's what you believe, do that and then let me do my job."

Whatever the root cause of a beauty trend turned crime trend, we can all agree the war spawned by weave must stop.

"A generation back or so it was tennis shoes, gym shoes people were being robbed and killed over tennis shoes," said Adkins. "Now people are being killed over hair and for weaves."

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<http://www.bedofnailz.com/alley.html>

Retrieved March 7th 2016 10:38pm PST USA

Demon's Alley is a road in West Milford, New Jersey which includes about half a dozen abandoned houses. The property is owned by the Newark Watershed Commission, and is posted and patrolled. Trespassers will be prosecuted if caught roaming the grounds.

URBAN LEGENDS

One man murdered everyone on the block

WeirdNJ offers: "THE DEMON'S ALLEY LEGEND I had always heard this spot was being preserved for some historical reasons, however recently I had brought a friend of mine who is a well-known photographer, and he was very impressed. He went back on his own to shoot some pictures, and the camera's shutter would not open (and there was nothing wrong with it). His camera's inability to work when photographing the houses made him stop at some of the small town stores on Rt 23 to try to get some more information on the stretch of houses. An old man told him quite a tale of the village. How true the story is I investigated no further, but it is quite scary. He claimed a man moved into the town in the early '80s who seemed to be a typical person and a normal resident. Shortly after his arrival weird things started happening. Small pranks, I assume. The residents suspected that it was kids coming off Rt. 23 to play jokes on the odd street. The new resident decided to hold a town meeting at his house to decide what to do about the pranksters. Little did the small community know about this man's history or the plans for all the people of the town. The old timer claimed this man had been a cult leader in the midwest and had a large following of members. He had perpetrated the pranks in a plot to get all the town members together under the roof of his home. Once all were gathered in the downstairs, cult members stampeded from the upper level and engaged in a massacre of every member of the town. Supposedly, the cult fled and were never caught. The old man said no one in the town talks about the incident, and most deny it ever happened."

Another variation of this story tells about a cult who killed everyone on the block before vanishing into the woods



Either way...this would be national headline news...if it were true that is. "demon's alley" is New City Road in West Milford, NJ. possible explanations The building inspector in West Milford wrote to me

"It is my understanding that homes in New City were built for workers employed by the city of Newark at the reservoir and water treatment plant. As the systems became more automated and transportation in the area improved, the housing for the workers was no longer needed and the houses were left vacant and fell into disrepair. The city of

Newark still owns the land and the buildings but doesn't feel they are worth saving or maintaining."

Another explanation is an outbreak of radon or carbon monoxide forcing people to evacuate

Another thing I read about was that the 466-acre property off Maple Road adjoining the watershed was formerly owned by the fabled moviemaker, Cecil B. DeMille. Could it be possible this string of "abandoned houses" were used as part of a movie set ?

(New York banker Leonard Miller now owns the nearby property, which he'd like to develop into a golf course, a hotel complex and conference center, and 16 single-family homes)

Why are the windows of the houses painted black with curtain pull strings

I don't understand why people make this a focal point of the "weirdness" of New City Road. Watershed workers painted plywood to look like window shades, and then put the plywood over the windows to make the houses look inhabited from afar. By doing this, in theory it also lessens the amounts of items being thrown through the windows as well as not allowing people to easily look inside the houses or break in. Think about when a store goes out of business and they soap their windows...same idea

ok so why were people's possessions left inside the houses

Two ways to look at this. The first being that people just left some junk behind when they left which is not uncommon

The second angle is that over time people used the empty houses as squats and brought in their own stuff

What About The Arson

On Saturday morning 11-04-00 at 04:40 hrs. West Milford Fire Dept. Co. 1, 2 and 4 were dispatched to a working structure fire on New City Road. This abandoned 2 story wood frame was located at the old City of Newark, New City Village.

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Dirhams for slaves.

Investigating the Slavic slave trade in the tenth century

The idea that a massive trade in Slavic slaves underpinned the economic growth of Europe in the 9th and 10th centuries is not new. It is, however, most often only implicit; and at any rate, it is very rarely discussed. Even though this was an obvious idea to the 19th-century Orientalists¹, the interest in slave trade gradually faded away, and virtually disappeared in the 70s and 80s. Recently, however, the concept of a large-scale slave trade that allowed the Western European economies to emerge from the Dark Ages has resurfaced in the Anglo-Saxon scholarship. Voiced emphatically by Michael McCormick ten years ago, it was readily accepted in a number of recent syntheses; but the reaction on the Continent was less enthusiastic. The debate which was thus reignited has already led to some progress, but – as can be seen from a map of Michael McCormick² – there are still some gaps to fill. The key area for the understanding of the mechanisms of the medieval slave trade has been disregarded. As the word "slave" indicates, no such study can be complete without an effort to understand what was happening in the Slavic lands. And this is not any more a vain pursuit: the archaeological material accumulated in the last 20 years allows a foray into this still virtually unexplored area. The objective of this paper is to get a sense of how the trade in Slavic slaves operated, of its scale, and of its impact. I will use the numismatic evidence and written sources as a starting point for a risky interpretation of the archaeological material.

Dirhams are good quality silver coins weighing on average 2.9 g. What makes them an invaluable source for a historian, is the inscription of the place and date of their minting. As opposed to early medieval Western European coinages, where a significant effort is needed to establish general chronological outlines, Arabic dirhams provide absolute and usually exact datings. We can thus follow in detail their flow into the Northern Lands, where they are found in large quantities in hoards. It is difficult to estimate the total quantity of dirhams discovered since records started in the 18th century. The biggest existing database contains 200,000 coins³, but many hoards had been scattered before they could be recorded. Over 1,000 hoards are known, and they may have comprised in total as much as 1 million coins. This is a very significant number. The Islamic dirhams would probably constitute

¹ D.A. Khvolson, *Извѣстія о хозарахъ, вуртасахъ, болгарахъ, мадьярахъ, славянахъ и руссахъ...*, St. Petersburg 1869;; G. Jacob, *Welche Handelsartikel bezogen die Araber des Mittelalters aus den nordisch-baltischen Ländern?*, 2. Auflage, Berlin 1891; J. Markwart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, Leipzig 1903.

² *Origins of the European economy. Communications and commerce, A.D. 300-900*, Cambridge 2001, p. 762.

³ Estimate based on R.K. Kovalev, A.C. Kaelin, "Circulation of Arab Silver in Medieval Afro-Eurasia: Preliminary Observations", *History Compass* 5 (2007), p. 560–580.

statement: "new research focuses at the landscape scale, rather than attempting to find physical evidence for slavery per se, assessing instead the settlement systems of slavery-based economies, and the depopulation and abandonment which followed from wars of enslavement"¹¹. This approach involves thus, in the first place, searching for evidence of sudden depopulation or population movements. Taking the example of Poland, I will try to show that the idea of applying such a methodology to Slavic archaeology is not eccentric.

Polish archaeology is in a post-revolutionary period. The traditional chronological framework based on the periodization of pottery collapsed after a substantial number of sites had been redated by dendrochronology. To give an example, Gniezno, the capital of the first Polish state, which was thought to have been built at the end of the 8th century, has now been shown to have been built 150 years later, in the year 940. If we take a wider perspective, almost no sites can currently be dated to the 8th century, and quite few to the 9th century. The situation changed abruptly in the 10th century, where fortresses were built on an impressive scale and silver was hoarded in several areas of the modern Poland. It is, however, unclear what caused this sudden acceleration.

A particularly promising area for the landscape approach lies at the southern edge of the core territory of the Piast state in Greater Poland. Population studies, based on palynological data and archaeological surveys, show that around the year 1000 the population was concentrated around the central fortresses of the Piast state such as Gniezno. Outer parts of Greater Poland were less densely populated, in particular the western part of the region. Now, in the previous phase of settlement the picture was exactly the opposite: it was precisely the western part of Greater Poland which had the highest population density, whereas the future Piast domain was almost empty (Fig. 5)¹². The dating of this earlier phase is controversial: this study was published when the old chronological framework was still in place, hence the dating to the 7th-8th centuries. The difficulty is that almost no settlements at all can currently be dated to this period, therefore a date in the 9th, or perhaps even in the early 10th century is much more likely.

¹¹ P.J. Lane, K.C. MacDonald, *Slavery in Africa. Archaeology and Memory*, Proceedings of the British Academy 168, Oxford 2011, p. 1.

¹² S. Kurnatowski, "Studia osadnicze nad strukturą zasiedlenia i gospodarką", *Ziemie polskie w X wieku i ich znaczenie w kształtowaniu się nowej mapy Europy*, ed. H. Samsonowicz, Kraków 2000, p. 329-350, esp. p. 339-340 n. 50, and maps 17 and 18.

eliminated or subjected. In my view, these types of evidence concur to suggest the violent elimination of the Obra tribe somewhere in the 940s.

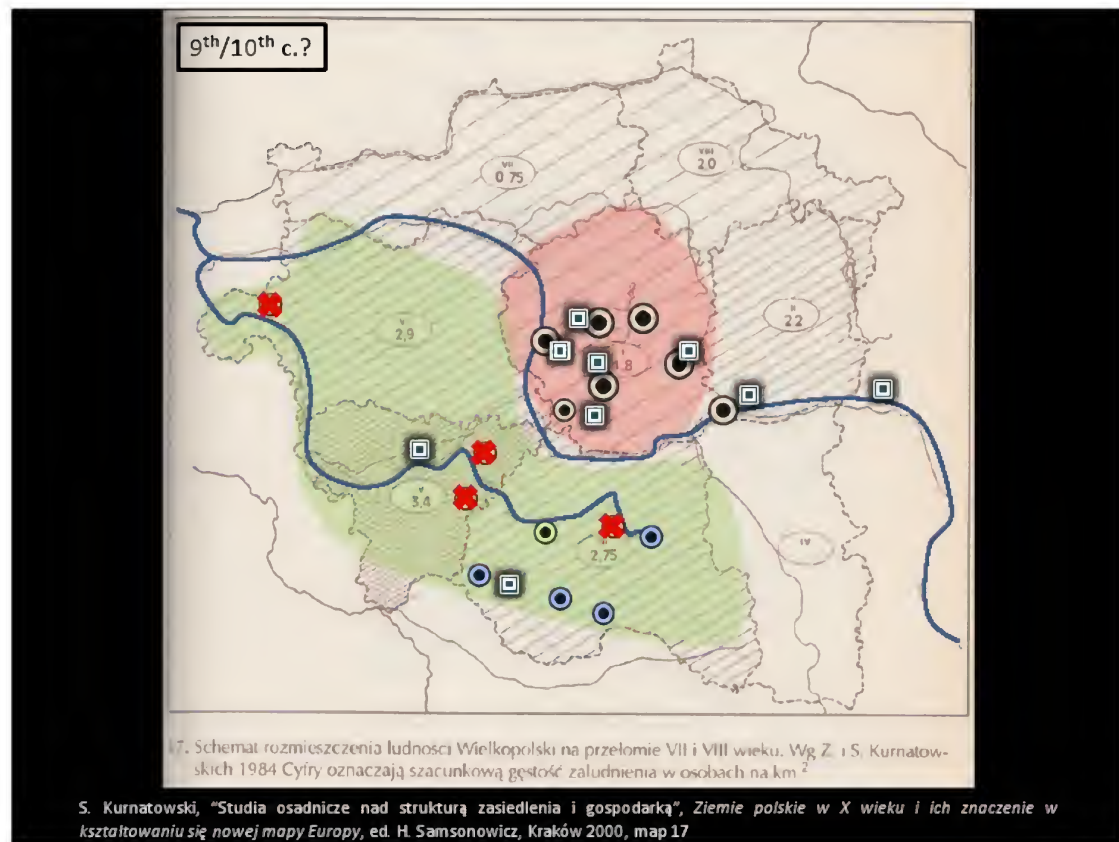


Fig. 6 – Hillforts (circles), destroyed hillforts (crossed circles) and hoards (squares) in Greater Poland.

This type of approach, based on the combined evidence of dendrochronology, hoards, surveys and excavations, suggests that also other regions in the western Slavic lands – such as Mazovia in Poland or Galicia in Western Ukraine – suffered depopulation in the second half of the 10th century. Further research is needed to confirm this intuition, but it can perhaps be conjectured that Slavic slaves on the markets of Prague, Bulgar and Itil originated from this kind of unfortunate tribes, reduced to slavery by neighbouring bands of warriors, such as the early Piasts or Premyslids.

My last point is that a long-distance slave trade involves sophisticated logistics. How these Slavic slaves were transported from their homelands to the slave markets? This brings me to the hillforts. They are the main feature of the early medieval landscape in the western Slavic lands. 2,312 hillforts have been catalogued in Poland, around 640 are described in the recent "Encyclopaedia of hillforts in the Czech Republic", several hundred were counted in Germany and in Ukraine. Some were built in the Bronze Age, some as late as in the 13th century, but those erected in the 9th and 10th centuries are a sizeable group if not a majority. They are often thought to be a response to a general feeling of insecurity, but it has not been explained what caused this sudden surge in insecurity. Hillforts varied

in size and hence no doubt in purpose (Fig. 7). Small hillforts, rarely exceeding a hectare or two, were mainly built in Germany and Northern and Western Poland. In some areas there are clusters of bigger fortifications, enclosing up to 5 ha; the two most prominent such clusters coincide with concentrations of hoards. A different kind of hillfort is common in Southern Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where hillforts were fewer and bigger, often reaching 20 ha and more. Western Ukraine is an exception: in addition to small and medium hillforts, several gigantic fortresses, extending over hundreds of hectares, are known. They can apparently be dated to the 10th century.

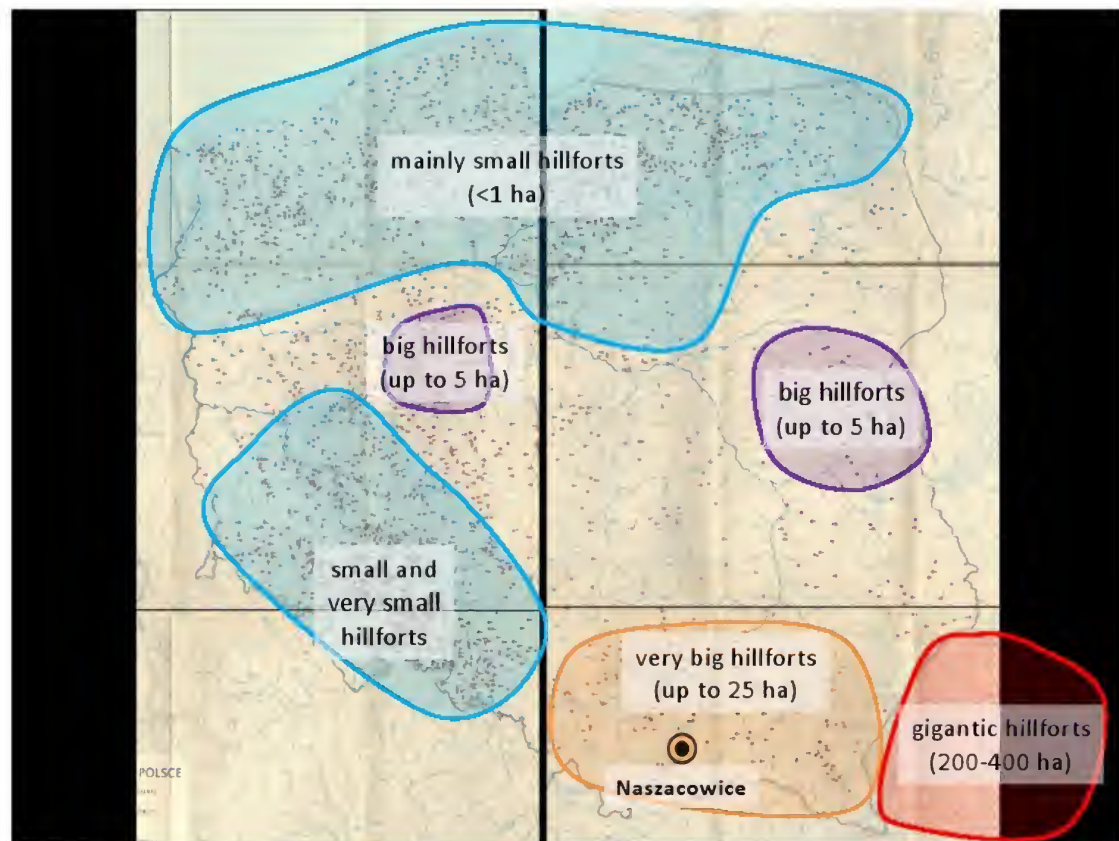


Fig. 7 – Hillforts in Poland.

In order to understand what was the purpose of the big and very big hillforts, I would like to take the example of Naszacowice in southern Poland. With its 15 ha it is the second biggest hillfort in Poland. It is situated on the high bank of the Dunajec river, an important communication corridor. As you can see the site commands the valley and offers excellent views. It has a relatively complicated plan, with a central section surrounded by two bigger sections and a third smaller one, which do not communicate with each other (Fig. 8). This site has been thoroughly excavated over a period of 20 years, but yielded very few finds¹³. Apparently the only house or two was built against the inner side

¹³ J. Poleski, *Naszacowice. Ein frühmittelalterlicher Burgwall am Dunajec*, 2 vols., Kraków 2004.

of the inner rampart. Other finds are limited to a skeleton of a young individual and a couple of ornaments of late Avar, Moravian and post-Moravian origin.



Fig. 8 – Naszacowice.

What does this mean? Naszacowice was not a fortified settlement, because it is empty. It was also not a refuge, because, on the one hand, it was situated on the main communication artery in this region – precisely the kind of environment which would be abandoned when enemy was approaching – and, on the other hand, no early medieval settlements are known from its vicinity. Still, substantial effort was invested in its construction. I propose to interpret it as a slave camp, garrisoned by warriors based in its central section who were also certainly keeping watch over the outer ramparts. It would have been periodically filled with captives on their way to a slave market, most probably that of Prague. I am tempted to explain in the same way the other big empty hillforts from southern Poland, the Czech Republic and western Ukraine.

It is time to bring together the dirhams, written sources and hillforts. The zone of the big empty hillforts coincides not only with the area almost devoid of dirham hoards, but also with the zone of influence of the dukes of Bohemia. We can perhaps consider this territory to be the catchment zone of the slave market of Prague. In that case, the big empty hillforts can be understood as nodal points of its system of supply, which relied on land transport over significant distances. Big caravans – such as the one

Ibn Fadlan joined on his way to Bulgar, which was composed of 3,000 horses and 5,000 men – were probably, we would say, the most cost-effective means of conveying slaves by land over hundreds of kilometres.

So why there are no big hillforts in the dirham area? Because of the navigable rivers, which enabled frequent, smaller shipments of the human cargo. Both the logic and the logistics of the two trade systems must have been very different.

I recapitulate. Written sources show that slaves were the most important commodity traded in the 10th-century Northern Europe; the sheer quantity of dirham hoards proves that its scale was far from negligible. I suggest that this slave trade left a much deeper imprint in the archaeological material than is usually thought. I realize that much work remains to be done, in the first place recording and publishing the numismatic material, and reviewing a larger body of archaeological evidence. But I think that this interpretation has the advantage of providing a coherent explanation for the extraordinary flow of Islamic dirhams to Northern Europe. It was the underlying slave trade with the Islamic world, and not with other parts of the Medieval world, that led to an unprecedented accumulation of capital, which was then reinvested in creating the Northern European states that we know today.

the largest body of statistically usable material for the early Middle Ages that would allow invaluable insights into the history of Eurasia – if only they were adequately published. Unfortunately, no exhaustive list of finds exists for Sweden, the numerous new finds from all over Northern Europe are only exceptionally published, and the immensely rich collections of the coin cabinets in Stockholm and St. Petersburg remain virtually unavailable. Few hoards have been fully studied, and cases such as the recent find of the huge hoard in the settlement of Spillings in Gotland which weighed almost 70 kg, where extensive archaeological excavations have been conducted on the find spot, are exceedingly rare. The dramatic increase in new finds brought about by metal detecting goes hand in hand with the shrinking number of specialists capable of documenting them. Overall, it is probably fair to qualify the research on the Islamic coins in Northern Europe as moribund.

My observations will be mainly based on a detailed list of hoards that I am compiling, and on a database of 48,000 coins, mainly from the Swedish collections, created by Gert Rispling that he kindly made available to me. If we look at the geographical distribution of the hoards (Fig. 1), the most salient feature is the cluster of *ca* 350 hoards on the Baltic island of Gotland.



Fig. 1 – Ninth- and tenth-century dirham hoards.

A similar number is recorded in Russia and Ukraine; big concentrations of hoards can also be found in Poland and Estonia. This is not a map of the Viking world: few dirhams have been found in Norway,

and the hoards from Denmark and mainland Sweden cannot stand comparison with Gotland or Poland. I will pass over the reasons for hoarding, which is probably best understood as a cultural phenomenon resulting from the ways of displaying status in Scandinavian societies. Many hoarding zones in Eastern Europe can indeed be connected with areas of Scandinavian settlement; in others, however, a large-scale Scandinavian presence cannot be proved, for instance in Estonia and in the Polish interior.

The stream of the dirhams flowing to the Northern Lands fluctuated significantly over time. The aggregated data for all the northern hoards show two periods of hoarding: a moderately dynamic in the 9th century, and a genuine "silver rush" in the 10th century, climaxing in the 950s with almost 120 hoards in a single decade. The two periods are separated by a lull in the 880s and 890s. On a regional level, variability is even greater. With the exception of Gotland, where dirhams were buried throughout the 9th and 10th centuries, no other region was able to attract the flow of dirhams for a longer period of time. For instance, all hoards from East Prussia are dated to the years 810-830, Danish hoards are as a rule later than 920, Estonian finds are concentrated between 940 and 980, whereas hoards clustered in Eastern Poland have *termini post quem* between 890 and 910.

This is a highly complex and dynamic picture. It tells us something on the nature of the trade between the Islamic world and the Northern Lands. The system as a whole was resilient enough to survive for almost two centuries, but its actors were in constant flux. They seem to emerge abruptly in seemingly random places, and to disappear even more rapidly. Only around the mid-10th century do the trade routes start to stabilize, when hoards clearly concentrate in areas such as Greater Poland, the region of Kiev and Svealand, where written sources would soon record the existence of early states. A link between the hoarding of the Islamic silver and state formation in Northern Europe can thus be posited.

If dirhams were flowing to unpredictable areas of Northern Europe, it is easier to identify where they were minted. In the 9th century Baghdad and other Iraqi mints produced most of the coins that ended up in the hoards, while in the 10th century over 80% of dirhams originated in the Samanid emirate centred in Transoxania. Almost no coins of the Spanish Umayyads are known from Northern Europe, despite the well-attested trade connections. The shift in the main producing centres of the dirhams flowing to the Northern Lands coincides with the two phases of hoarding we have already observed. In what follows, I will concentrate my attention on the second, 10th-century phase of the Oriental trade.

One category of coins deserves a special mention: the so-called imitations. At first sight, they are just poor copies of the original Abbasid or Samanid dirhams. They are found in significant quantities in the Northern European hoards: probably more than 10% of hoarded dirhams are imitations. Gert Rispling from Stockholm studied their dies extensively, and was able to build remarkably long chains of dies, resulting from the combination of different obverse dies with different reverse dies. These die-links show that imitations were produced in a limited number of mints, certainly outside the Islamic world, as their blundered legends demonstrate. Their silver content, perhaps surprisingly, was not inferior to that of regular Islamic issues. If they were not a means of introducing debased metal into circulation, why were they produced? Rispling's studies suggest that the 9th-century imitations were chiefly

produced by the Khazars, while the 10th-century imitative coinage can be attributed mainly to the Volga Bulgars. They seem to have been produced *ad hoc* – as frequent permutations of the dies demonstrate – probably in order to correct some market disequilibrium. If we imagine that goods were exchanged at yearly fairs – and the account of Ibn Fadlan does suggest a yearly rhythm of trade – we can conceive that the Bulgars and the Khazars were acting as middlemen between the Northern and the Islamic merchants. This is confirmed by the written sources to which I will now turn.

There is no shortage of written sources on the slave trade in the 10th century. The Arab geographers are explicit that dirhams were paid mainly for slaves and furs. Ibn Rusta, who was writing at the beginning of the 10th century, describes how the Rus, which at this stage means Scandinavians settled in Eastern Europe, were making profits on the Slavic – in Arabic Saqāliba – slaves:

“The Rus (...) raid the Saqaliba, sailing in their ships until they come upon them, take them captive and sell them in Khazaria and in Bulgar. They have no cultivated fields and they live by pillaging the land of the Saqaliba. (...) They have no dwellings, villages or cultivated fields. They earn their living by trading in sable, grey squirrel and other furs. They sell them for silver coins which they set in belts and wear round their waists. (...) They treat their slaves well and dress them suitably, because for them they are an article of trade.”⁴

The mention of Khazaria and of Bulgar confirms the picture emerging from the study of the imitations, namely that exchanges were concentrated in a small number of marketplaces. From Bulgar, we have the famous eye-witness account of Ibn Fadlan, who visited it in 922, and who emphasizes the central importance of the slave trade:

“I saw the Rus, who had come for trade and camped by the river Itil. (...) Round their necks, [their women] wear torques of gold and silver, for every man, as soon as he accumulates 10,000 dirhams, has a torque made for his wife. When he has 20,000, he has two torques made [and so on]. (...) With them, there are beautiful slave girls, for sale to the merchants. Each of the men has sex with his slave, while his companions look on. (...) As soon as their boats arrive at this port, each of them disembarks (...) and prostrates himself before a great idol, saying to it: ‘Oh my lord, I have come from a far country and I have with me such and such a number of young slave girls, and such and such a number of sable skins (...). I would like you to do the favour of sending me a merchant who has large quantities of dinars and dirhams and who will buy everything that I want and not argue with me over my price’.”⁵

Ibn Fadlan’s insistence on slave girls is perhaps more than voyeurism. It probably tells us something about the nature of the demand for Slavic slaves in the Islamic world. Saqaliba slaves are quite conspicuous in Arabic sources. In accordance with the then prevailing views on the merits of

⁴ P. Lunde, C. Stone, *Ibn Fadlān and the land of darkness : Arab travellers in the far north*, London 2012, p. 126.

⁵ P. Lunde, C. Stone, *Ibn Fadlān and the land of darkness : Arab travellers in the far north*, London 2012, p. 45-48.

individual races, they were thought to be suitable for specific types of service. Thus, in Iraq Saqaliba are unattested as slave soldiers or administrators, unlike the Turks, or even as agricultural or mining workforce similar to the Zanj slaves. They are, however, amply attested in the urban literature of the bourgeoning cities of Iraq as domestic servants, concubines and eunuchs. To give an example, the works of al-Jahiz, a prolific writer from Basra who died in 868/9, are full of allusions to the Saqaliba. In his *Book of Animals* he describes, for instance, how to improve a Slavic slave:

"If there are two Slavic brothers from the same mother and father, even if one of them is the twin brother of the other, when one of them is castrated, he becomes a better servant and smarter in all kinds of activity and manual work. He will be more skilled in them and more fitting for them. You will also find him more intelligent in conversation – these are all his qualities. His brother will remain in his innate ignorance, natural stupidity and Slavic simple-mindedness; he will also be unable to understand foreign languages. His hand will be clumsy and he will not become skilful, because his intellect will not be trained. He will not be able to express himself freely and eloquently, nor to pronounce clearly. (...) The first result of the castration of a Saqlabi is the purification of his intelligence, sharpening of his acumen, strengthening of his nature and stimulation of his mind."⁶

This passage probably explains the shortcomings of my paper, but more importantly it highlights the substantial presence of the Slavic eunuchs in Basra around the mid-9th century. It would seem that trade in the Slavic slaves consisted mainly of high-value individuals, such as eunuchs and young women. This peculiar profile of the slaves imported from the Slavic lands may explain the apparent profitability of this very long-distance trade.

The Arab sources thus create the impression of ubiquity of the Slavic slaves. The question of the scale of this slave trade is crucial for the understanding of its mechanisms. Therefore, I would like to propose the risky exercise of recalculating dirhams into slaves. For all the uncertainty involved in this kind of calculation, I think that it is useful to estimate the order of magnitude of the slave traffic to which the number of dirhams found in the Northern Lands corresponds. The details of this calculation are illustrated below (Fig. 2); the result is in the order of tens of thousands, and not hundreds of thousands, of Slavic slaves sold to the eastern part of the Islamic world in the 10th century. This may seem intellectual charlatantry, but I think it is unlikely that we err here more than by an order of magnitude. Assumptions are as prudent as possible, including the one concerning the percentage of the total original flow of silver that is preserved in the recorded hoards. This ratio can be estimated on the basis of the die studies of the imitations, if we assume that virtually all of them were exported to the Northern Lands. Overall, this is still a high number of slaves, but, on the other hand, it can be recalculated into several hundred, at best a thousand and several hundred, of slaves sold per year, a scale which seems perhaps less spectacular.

⁶ Lewicki, *Źródła arabskie do dziejów Słowiańszczyzny*, vol. 1, Wrocław 1956, p. 166-167.

Known 10 th -century dirhams	800,000
Average weight of a dirham (taking into account their fragmentation)	0.6 g
Dirhams reused for silver ornaments and ingots	25%
Total recorded 10 th -century Oriental silver	0.6 t
Coins recorded as percentage of the total inflow in the 10 th c. (based on the imitations)	2.5-5%
Total inflow of silver in the 10 th c.	12-24 t
--- in dirhams	4-8,000,000
Paid for slaves	75%
Dirhams paid for slaves in the 10 th c.	3-6,000,000
Price of a slave in Itil/Bulgar	100 dirhams?
Number of slaves sold for dirhams in the 10 th c.	30-60,000

Fig. 2 – Simulation of the number of slaves sold into slavery in the 10th century.

This calculation does not include Saqaliba slaves exported to Spain. Spain is a special case. On the one hand, Saqaliba slaves are well attested in Spain, again mainly as domestic servants: at least several thousand of them are said to have lived in Madinat al-Zahra under the caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III in the mid-10th century⁷. But the Saqaliba also played in Spain a role which in the eastern part of the Islamic world was reserved for the Turks. They constituted a significant part of the caliphal administration and guard, and used these positions as springboards to spectacular careers. A recent prosopography lists by name over 100 Saqaliba from Umayyad Spain⁸, a result impressive both by the number of the known individuals and by the diversity of positions in the army and administration they were filling. Spain was thus another important zone of demand for Slavic slaves.

We are here getting close to a crucial point. Even though thousands of Slavic slaves made their way to 10th-century Spain, only several dozen of 10th-century Spanish coins were found in the northern hoards. Moreover, very few 10th-century silver hoards are known from the region of Prague, which is

⁷ Ibn Idhari, *Kitāb al-bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-al-Maghrib*, ed. G.S. Colin, E. Lévi-Provençal, Leiden 1948-1951, II, 232.

⁸ M. Meouak, *Ṣaqālība, eunuques et esclaves à la conquête du pouvoir. Géographie et histoire des élites politiques "marginales" dans l'Espagne umayyade*, Helsinki 2004 (Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae 331), 156-207.

associated in our sources with the exportation of the Slavic slaves to Spain. If dirhams were indeed flowing to the Northern Lands as the payment for slaves, why, in a region where slave trade is attested by written sources, do we get no silver at all?

We find a hint in the description of al-Andalus by yet another geographer, Ibn Hawqal, who travelled extensively between 943 and 973 and visited both Spain and Central Asia:

“One of the famous items of their merchandise is handsome slave-girls and slave-boys captured in the land of the Franks and in Galicia, as well as Saqaliba eunuchs. All the Saqaliba eunuchs on the surface of the earth are imported from al-Andalus, because they are castrated near that country, and this is done by Jewish merchants. (...) The country [of the Saqaliba] is long and wide. (...) The sea-arm stretching from the ocean towards the country of Gog and Magog traverses their country (...) cutting it into two halves. Thus half of their country, along its whole length, is raided by the Khurasanis who take prisoners from it, while its northern half is raided by the Andalusians. (...) In these areas, many captives can still be obtained”⁹.

A look at the world map appended to the work of Ibn Hawqal may help us to understand this account (Fig. 3). If we turn it upside down, to orientate it northwards, we see a body of water, which extends from Constantinople to the north, presumably through the Black Sea, somewhere to the Outer Ocean. This concept serves to explain how the two extremities of the Islamic World, Spain and Khorasan, could possibly have access to the same pool of Saqaliba slaves. Ibn Hawqal conjectures that this was because the land of the Saqaliba is “long and wide”, which is not false. But in reality, when saying that the Spanish and the Khurasanis were getting their Slavic slaves at the opposite two ends of the Slavic lands, he implies the existence of two separate trade systems. We have already seen the eastern one, where the Rus were selling Slavic slaves for Samanid dirhams at the markets of Bulgar and of Itil. As for the other one, sources suggest that the Spanish market was supplied by Jewish merchants who were buying Slavic slaves at the market of Prague.

⁹ Ibn Hawqal, *Configuration de la terre (Kitab surat al-Ard)*, tr. J. H. Kramers, G. Wiet, Beyrouth 1964, vol. 1, p. 109.



Fig. 3 – Ibn Hawqal's map of the world.

We have a travelogue of one of these merchants, Ibrahim b. Ya'qub from Tortosa, who travelled around 960 to Prague. He stresses the importance of its market, and lists slaves among its chief commodities. Other sources confirm the connection between the slave market of Prague, the Jewish merchants, and Spain. But why there are no dirhams in Prague? Several explanations may be proposed. First of all, there are also no dirhams in the Carolingian Empire and its successor states, which indicates some control over currency crossing the borders. With some bewilderment, Ibrahim b. Ya'qub noted that trade in Prague was conducted not with monetary means of exchange, but by means of kerchiefs, small pieces of cloth, which had an exchange rate versus silver. The availability of silver was clearly lower in Prague than in regions trading with the Samanids; and we should not dismiss a cultural reason for the absence of hoarding: Czech warriors apparently did not display their status through the possession of vast quantities of silver.

Thus two distinct systems of trade in the Slavic slaves were in operation in the 10th century, one run by the Rus and other Scandinavians, and marked by hoards of dirhams; the other dirhamless, centred on Prague and supplied by the Czech dukes (Fig. 4). Even if other slave markets operated in the 9th and 10th centuries – for instance, Constantinople, apparently supplied at least partly by the Magyars – these two trade systems are likely to have been the most massive. They may also have left the highest number of material traces, as I will try to demonstrate now.

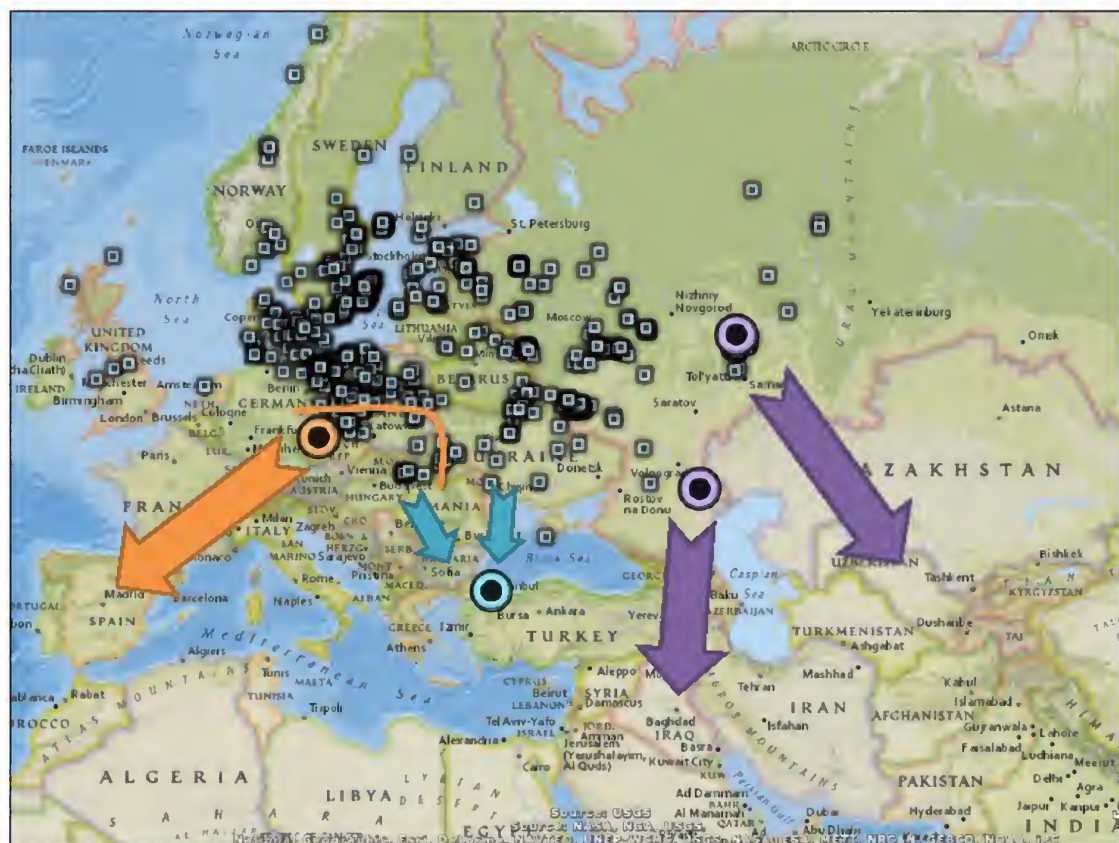


Fig. 4 – Two systems of trade in the Slavic slaves in the 10th century.

Can we hope for any archaeological traces of the trade in Slavic slaves? Can we say more precisely where the slaves originated, how they were enslaved, and how they were transported to the slave markets of Bulgar, Itil and Prague? Slave trade is usually thought to be invisible archaeologically. Its direct traces are indeed difficult to identify. Twenty years ago, Joachim Henning composed a catalogue of iron fetters from medieval Central Europe¹⁰. Of the 32 finds he listed, only 6 can be dated to the 9th-11th centuries. They all come from the fringes of the Slavic world, from regions such as Khazaria that, as we have seen, played a pivotal role in the slave trade. They thus attest to the reality of the slave trade, but it is difficult to draw any other conclusions. To my knowledge, other forms of direct evidence, such as distinctive burial types, have not yet been identified, neither in the Slavic lands nor in the Islamic world. Methods such as strontium analysis or ancient DNA sampling cannot thus be applied. Genetic studies of the modern populations may also prove to be ultimately inconclusive, given that Central Asian populations were probably exposed to contact with Slavs also in later times, as a result of Mongol invasions or of the modern Russian colonization.

Recent studies on the archaeology of slavery in Africa are informed by a different approach. A collection of studies published several months ago begins, on the first page, with the following

¹⁰ J. Henning, 'Gefangenenfesseln im slawischen Siedlungsraum und der europäische Sklavenhandel im 6. bis 12. Jahrhundert', *Germania* 70 (1992), p. 403-26.

Dog vampire caught while sucking out puppy's blood (photos) nigeriannewspapers.today

Dog vampire caught while sucking out puppy's blood (photos)

News Editor 03/02/2016 General News



The man was arrested following accusations that he was drinking the blood of live dogs, and when police stormed his home, they found him feeding on a live puppy

– A Yemen man was caught sucking puppy's blood

– He was dubbed a 'dog vampire' by local residents

– He may be prosecuted for animal cruelty

An unidentified man was detained and brought to police station after his neighbours caught him drinking a dog's blood. The man reportedly sucked out canine's blood on a regular basis before killing poor animals in Hudaydah, western Yemen.

The man was arrested following accusations that he was drinking the blood of live dogs, and when police stormed his home, they found him feeding on a live puppy

According to local media, he tried to escape the arrest but was eventually restrained by police officers with the help of locals. Some villagers accused the man of being a 'dog vampire', who had been living for months feeding on animal blood.

Emirates247 reports: "They found a little dog with him. He was sucking its blood alive. Police said the man is not from the region and speaks strange languages." It's unknown what kind of offense the psycho will be charged with, but it's highly likely he would be prosecuted for animal cruelty.



Pictures show the man after his arrest wearing a dirty grey jumpsuit and tied to a bench with a rope

Pictures show the man after his arrest wearing a dirty grey jumpsuit and tied to a bench with a rope

Many cultures consume blood of domesticated animals as food, often in combination with meat, while some cultures, blood is taboo. The Igbo ethnic group of Nigeria has no explicit prohibitions against eating blood, but most regard it with disgust and refuse to eat any meat perceived as "bloody" or undercooked.

Goats, cattle, and other animals slaughtered in the traditional Igbo manner are dispatched with a single cut across the neck and then most or all of the blood is allowed to slowly drain from the wound. This practice may have been influenced by the Igbo Jewish community that apparently predates contact with Europe.

The post Dog vampire caught while sucking out puppy's blood (photos) appeared first on Nigeria News today & Breaking news | Read on NAIJ.COM.

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Dog 'vampire' held in Yemen

emirates247.com

Man sucks blood of dogs

By

- Staff

Published Tuesday, March 01, 2016



Police stormed an isolated house and arrested the man. (Supplied)

Yemeni police arrested a man dubbed “the vampire” for sucking blood of dogs alive before killing them, newspapers reported on Tuesday.

Police stormed an isolated house with the help of residents in the Western town of Hudaydah and seized the man, who tried to flee.

“They found a little dog with him. He was sucking its blood alive. Police said the man is not from the region and speaks strange languages,” the Saudi

daily ‘Ajel’ said.

البيان الإمارات اليوم 24|7 EMIRATES Copyright © 2016. Dubai Media Incorporated. All rights reserved.

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'Dog vampire' who drank canines' blood is captured 'feeding' on puppy

05:39 EST, 2 March 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

'Dog vampire' who bit and sucked out canines' blood is captured in Yemen while 'feeding' on a puppy

- **Man arrested in Yemen after being found 'sucking blood from a puppy'**
- **Police say he had been living as a 'vampire' drinking animal blood**
- **He had reportedly sucked blood from live dogs, before killing them**

By Sara Malm for MailOnline

A man has been arrested in Yemen after being accused of drinking the blood of live dogs before killing them, local news reports.

The man had been reported to police by neighbours in Hudaiydah, western Yemen, who accused him of being a 'dog vampire'.

When police arrived at the unnamed man's isolated home, they found him 'sucking the blood of a puppy'.



The man reportedly tried to flee the scene, but was restrained by police with the help of local residents.

'They found a little dog with him. He was sucking its blood alive,' Emirates247 reports.

'Police said the man is not from the region and speaks strange languages.'

Pictures show the man after his arrest, with what appears to be wounds to his face, wearing a dirty grey jumpsuit and tied to a bench with a rope.

It is not known what crime the man will be charged with, but it is believed he can be prosecuted for animal cruelty.

Drinking the blood of live animals is part of tribal culture in a number of indigenous and tribal cultures across the world.

The Inuit, who live in Canada, Greenland and Alaska, believe drinking seal blood has health benefits, while some tribes in Africa drink blood from live cattle as part of ancient rituals.

Read more:



• Dog 'vampire' held in Yemen - Emirates 24|7



Comments (73)

Justus Benavidez, los angeles, United States, about 6 hours ago

tell him to move to china

RTW1, East Coast, United States, about 7 hours ago

There's what you do with any captured ISIS. Toss them in his cell.

SualGoodman, England, United Kingdom, about 8 hours ago

Top breeders recommend it coz its solid nourishment!

Poppy, Newbury, about 8 hours ago

I just hope they saved the little dog.

Bill Loni, Ipswich, United Kingdom, about 8 hours ago

The sort of people waiting at Calais to come here.

ronlat, Brisbane, about 8 hours ago

This is what happens when you Marry you're first Cousin!

jules st john, swansea, about 9 hours ago

sicko should have been shot as soon as found

cherryandcats, vienna, about 10 hours ago

should have been dealt with there and then. i know what i would do to him. that poor doggy would have been his last meal.

theminions, liverpool, United Kingdom, about 10 hours ago

The human race is going backwards fast

Whale Of A Time, Somewhere, Jersey, about 8 hours ago

What, because of one deranged man eating a few dogs you're whole faith in humankind has been obliterated?

gigabite1277, Bristol, about 10 hours ago

He could have survived fine just on Dog Milk.

Terrys Old Wig, Misses Him, United Kingdom, about 11 hours ago

Some people have to eat, spare me the sanctimony as you sit down to your big steak dinner. People in the far east do it every day, it is cultural. I'm going to try it myself, my neighbour has 2 jack russells I'd love to boil.

Sen Dog, Everywhere, United Kingdom, about 10 hours ago

Come see me & I'll boil you son.

Terrys Old Wig, Misses Him, United Kingdom, about 9 hours ago

Ok then, post your address and I'll be right round. Get the cooker on. Go on post your address or are you too scared? Thought so, internet tough guy.

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Dollhouse Graves of Indiana

graveyardgirl.net

Aug 14, 2014 by Jennifer in Graves of Interest

Vivian Mae Allison and Lova Cline were two young girls taken from their families much too soon. Their devoted parents built and then placed dollhouses on their graves, an unusual sight for many people who first come across them.



*Inside Vivian's dollhouse
Inside Vivian's dollhouse
Trinkets left by visitors of
Vivian's The story behind Lova
and her dollhouse Inside
Lova's dollhouse*



*Inside Vivian's dollhouse
Inside Vivian's dollhouse
Trinkets left by visitors of
Vivian's The story behind Lova
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Lova's dollhouse*

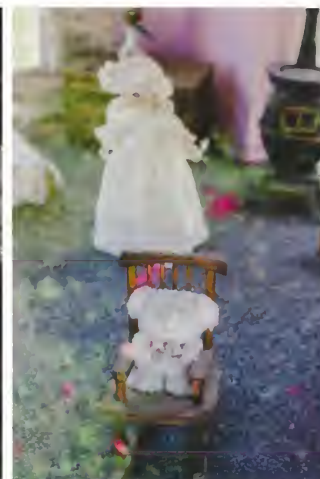
Vivian (1894-1899) is buried in the Connersville City Cemetery in Connersville, Indiana. Inside is tiny dolls and furniture, and on the roof sits tokens from recent visitors. During my visit, the house was painted white, although in other pictures you can see it was once a variety of colors (see here and here.)

Lova Cline's (1902-1908) dollhouse is very similar, the houses looking nearly identical. Again, inside the dollhouse sits tiny furniture and dolls. You can read much of the dollhouse's history in one of the images in the slideshow below!

I'm an avid cemetery lover, writer, photographer, and reader. I grew up in southern Indiana, and that's where most of my travels occur.

One thought on “Dollhouse Graves of Indiana”

1. Pingback: Dollhouse graves - ~ House Crazy ~
2. Trackback: Dollhouse graves - ~ House Crazy ~



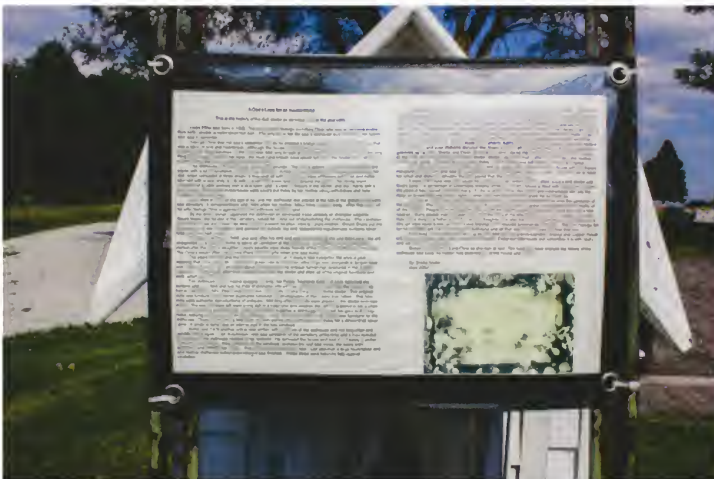
Inside Vivian's dollhouse

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Trinkets left by visitors of Vivian's



The story behind Lova and her dollhouse



Inside Lova's dollhouse



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Drunk man arrested after he tried to dig up his father's grave

16:44 EST, 18 August 2015 |

dailymail.co.uk



Busted: Michael D. May (above) was arrested on Monday night at the Pilot Baptist Cemetery in Kentucky. He told deputies that he was trying to dig up his late father's grave to have an argument with him. The cemetery is located behind the Pilot Baptist Church seen in the photo above.

Authorities arrest drunk man who tried to dig up his father's grave because he wanted to have an argument with him

- **Authorities arrested Michael Dale May after he tried to dig up his father's grave at the Pilot Baptist Church cemetery in Stanford, Kentucky**
- **The 44-year-old man told police that he wanted to have an argument with his dad who died about 30 years ago**
- **He was charged with violating a grave and public**

Daily Mail

.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

intoxication

By Regina F. Graham For Dailymail.com

A drunk man was arrested after sheriff's deputies said he tried to dig up his late father's grave so that he could have an

argument with him.

Lincoln County Sheriff's Deputies arrested Michael Dale May on Monday night at the Pilot Baptist Church cemetery in Stanford, Kentucky.

WAVE reported that the 44-year-old man told authorities that his father died about 30 years ago and was buried at the cemetery, which is located behind the church.

According to the cemetery's registry, 13 people with the last name of May are buried at that location.

Willis Green May was the only man that died about 30 years ago on Nov. 23, 1983, but it's not clear if he was the intoxicated man's father.

In 2002, a man named Eugene May was the last person ever buried at the cemetery, according to the registry.

May was charged with violating a grave, public intoxication and possession of marijuana.

As of Tuesday afternoon, May had not been released from jail according to Lincoln County records.



- Pilot Baptist Cemetery
Lincoln County, Ky
- Report: Intoxicated Ky. man
tried to dig up dad's grave -
wave3.com-Louisville News,
Weather & Sports
- Lincoln County Regional Jail

Comments (85)

Gesshoo, underarock, United States, 6 months ago



Hillbillies,
not to smart
are they.

Daisylane,
Wherethewildthingsare,
United States, 6 months ago

Wow he was intoxicated
when he did it? I never
would have guessed
that.



Arby1, St. Paul, United States, 6 months ago

He's still got a beef with the old man from when he was 14.

aberrant_apostrophe, Reading, United Kingdom, 6 months ago

Not the first time this sort of thing has happened. The late Pope Formosus was dug up and put on trial by his successor in the infamous Cadaver Synod in 897.

Pilchard the cat, Up North, United Kingdom, 6 months ago

He'd have won hands down, make no bones about it!

Migg, Wolverhampton, Syria, 6 months ago

lol

KAB, Zabbar, Malta, 6 months ago

hahaha

saravana, Doha, Qatar, 6 months ago

AMERICANO!

BigC, liverpool, United Kingdom, 6 months ago

He said he had a bone to pick with him...

tenantm, larn, United Kingdom, 6 months ago

Was he on beer or SPIRITS?

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Alternative Scouting: Earn Your Merit Badge in Grave Robbing, Hexes, and Other Horrible Things

By Charlie Hintz on February 16, 2016

Get your badge in grave robbing, cryptozoology, espionage, curses and hexes, home dentistry, cannibalism, mind control, time travel, necromancy and more.



Alternative Scouting merit badges by Luke Drozd

Artist Luke Drozd created these Alternative Scouting merit badges based on a comic strip from his book *Threnodies: Odes, Laments and Yarns*. This is scouting for all of us weird kids. If you're here on Cult of Weird right now, you've probably earned at least a few of these already:

- Home Dentistry
- Curses & Hexes
- Grave Robbing
- Violent Revenge
- Cryptozoology
- Prank Calls
- Spirit Medium
- Mind Control
- Espionage
- Money Laundering
- Cannibalism
- Arson
- Mob Justice
- Time Travel
- Invisibility
- Necromancy



Alternative Scouting merit badges are available to order now from the artist's store right here.

Which badges have you already earned?

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Easter Islanders did not indulge in interpersonal violence prior to collapse

pasthorizonspr.com

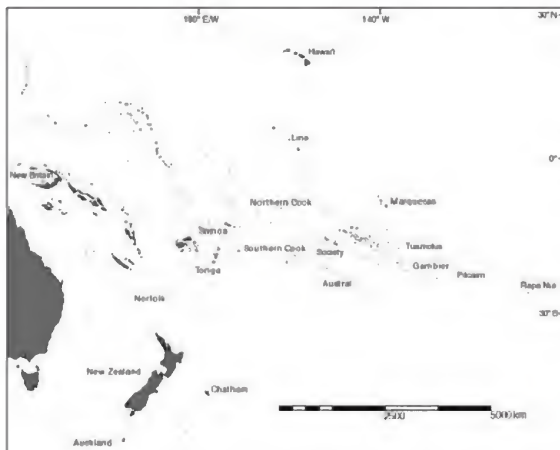
Posted on February 16, 2016



Analysis of artefacts found on the shores of Rapa Nui, Chile (Easter Island) originally thought to be used as spear points reveal that these objects were likely general purpose tools instead, providing evidence contrary to the widely held belief that the ancient civilization was destroyed by warfare.

According to Carl Lipo, professor of anthropology at Binghamton University and lead on the study, the traditional story for Rapa Nui holds that the people, before Europeans arrived, ran out of resources and, as a result, engaged in massive in-fighting, which led to their collapse. One of the pieces of evidence used to support this theory is the

thousands of obsidian, triangular objects found on the surface, known as mata'a. Because of their large numbers and because they're made of sharp glass, many believe the mata'a to be the weapons of war that the ancient inhabitants of the island used for interpersonal violence.



Map of the Pacific Islands showing Rapa Nui. Image: Carl Lipo at Binghamton University

Not used in warfare

Lipo and his team analysed the shape variability of a photo set of 400-plus mata'a collected from the island using a technique known as morphometrics, which allowed them to characterize the shapes in a quantitative manner. Based on the wide variability in shape of the mata'a and their difference from other traditional weapons, the team determined that the mata'a were not used in warfare after all, as they would have made poor weapons.

"We found that when you look at the shape of these things, they just don't look like weapons at all," said Lipo. "When you can compare them to European weapons or weapons found anywhere around the world when there are actually objects used for warfare, they're very systematic in their shape. They have to do their job really well. Not doing well is risking death."

"You can always use something as a spear. Anything that you have can be a weapon. But under the conditions of warfare, weapons are going to have performance characteristics. And they're going to be very carefully fashioned for that purpose because it matters... You would cut somebody {with a mata'a}, but they certainly wouldn't be lethal in any way."

According to Lipo, this evidence strongly supports the idea that the ancient civilization never experienced this oft-theorized combat and warfare, and that the belief that the mata'a were weapons used in the collapse of the civilization is really a late European interpretation of the record, not an actual archaeological event.

"What people traditionally think about the island is being this island of catastrophe and collapse just isn't true in a pre-historic sense. Populations were successful and lived sustainably on the island up until European contact," said Lipo.

Cultivation tools

Lipo and his team believe that the mata'a are found all over the landscape because they were actually cultivation tools used in ritual tasks like tattooing or domestic activities like plant processing.

"We've been trying to focus on individual bits of evidence that support the collapse narrative to demonstrate that really there's no support whatsoever for that story," he said. "Sort of a pillar of the broader study is the fact that this is an amazing society that really was successful. It just doesn't look like success to us because we see fields that are rock, we think catastrophe, and in fact it's actually productivity."



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Man tortured to death in 'satanic ritual to turn him into a vampire' at cafe

metro.co.uk

Restaurant worker tortured to death during 'satanic ritual to turn him into a vampire'

Tanveer Mann for Metro.co.uk Monday 7 Mar 2016 5:47 pm



Restaurant worker tortured to death during 'satanic ritual to turn him into a vampire'

Restaurant worker Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle

A restaurant worker was tortured to death during a 'satanic ritual to turn him into a vampire', police say.

Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle in Chihuahua.

Three people have been arrested and are accused of killing their friend during a satanic ceremony at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.

Iveth Lopez, 18, Gustavo Dorantes, 18 and Omar Sanchez, 25, could face up to 40 years in prison if found guilty.

Police say Palma was fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult called the sons of Baphomet 1.

But instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers said he should be sacrificed so he could be a vampire again.



POLICE in Mexico have arrested three people accused of killing a

Iveth Lopez, 18, Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25 are being held in connection with Palma's murder and could face up to 40 years in prison if found guilty

His body was discovered in a street wrapped inside two plastic bags.

Detectives believe his killers wanted to make it look like it was a drugs-related crime.

The victim's blood was found inside the

friend they were trying to turn into a vampire during a satanic ceremony at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop. A tragic restaurant worker Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle. The horrific crime happened near the regional congress building in Chihuahua in the north of the country. A teenage girl, 18-year-old student Iveth Lopez, is among those being held. The other two suspects were named as Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25. They face up to 40 years in prison if found guilty. Police say Edwin, known as Piwa, was killed after being fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult called the Sons of Baphomet. Instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers persuaded the others their victim should be sacrificed so he could return to life as a vampire. Police were alerted last Tuesday after his body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder off as a drugs-related crime.

cyber cafe, which is believed to be owned by the older man accused.

He was reportedly killed inside the toilets in the middle of the night and the killers are said to have used bleach to clean up the scene.

The leader of the sect is still on the run from police.

Police chief Pablo Rocha said: 'This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called

Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire.

'All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we have.'

His sister wrote on social media after his funeral: 'I know as his sister that he wouldn't have wanted us to be sad about his departure.'

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Egyptians were buried in recycled coffins, research reveals

Maev Kennedy

Saturday 20 February 2016 Last modified on Saturday 20 February 2016

theguardian.com

New exhibition at Fitzwilliam Museum shows how tomb thieves stole materials from older coffins to make new ones



One of Nespareshnefyt's coffins, which x-rays revealed was made from parts from one older coffin. Photograph: Andrew Norman/The Fitzwilliam Museum, Image Li
Painted wooden coffin inscribed for a woman with the title 'Lady of the House', called Nakht, thought to be dated from 1985-1773 BC. Photograph: Andrew Norman/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
Coffin of a priest called Nakhtefmut. After the mummy was inserted, the slit was laced together and a board inserted under the feet. Photograph: Michael Jones/The Fitzwilliam Museum,

Eternal rest could last a surprisingly short time in ancient Egypt.

Surprising research, revealed for the first time in an exhibition opening next week at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, exposes that many were buried in new and decorated coffins, patched together from pieces of older coffins; some made only a few generations earlier.

"How long did immortality last? This research raises many interesting questions which we can't yet answer," said curator Helen Strudwick. "Did people know, when they chose their coffins, that they were secondhand? Were recycled coffins cheaper?"



The raw

Painted wooden coffin inscribed for a woman with the title 'Lady of the House', called Nakht, thought to be dated from 1985-1773 BC. Photograph: Andrew Norman/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
Coffin of a priest called Nakhtefmut. After the mummy was inserted, the slit was laced together and a board inserted under the feet. Photograph: Michael Jones/The Fitzwilliam Museum,

materials can only have been obtained by tomb robbers, who most likely would have removed the original occupants, whose families would have paid a large sum for the coffins and the painted inscriptions promising a good afterlife.

Most Egyptian tombs found by archaeologists have been robbed at some point. It had been assumed that the thieves were targeting the gold jewellery and gemstones and other precious objects buried with the dead. The new research raises the intriguing possibility that the coffins themselves were as valuable as any of the contents.

Strudwick wonders how widespread and organised the trade was, and whether the coffin makers kept a stock of broken up coffins at the back of the workshop.

Some of the coffins were evidently bought off the peg and personalised with elaborate inscriptions naming and praising the dead, while others incorporating recycled material were high-status objects commissioned in life. A set of coffins made for Nespawersheft, chief of scribes at the temple of Amun-Re at Thebes, covered in painted decoration and inscriptions, were made years before his death and later altered to promote his achievements – yet the x-ray and CT scans show that they include parts of at least one older coffin, and were pieced together from many bits of wood, with older dowel and mortise holes carefully filled. Wads of linen, clay and straw were used to pack other splits and gaps.



Painted wooden coffin inscribed for a woman with the title 'Lady of the House', called Nakht, thought to be dated from 1985-1773 BC. Photograph: Andrew Norman/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum
Coffin of a priest called Nakhtefmut. After the mummy was inserted, the slit was laced together and a board inserted under the feet. Photograph: Michael Jones/The Fitzwilliam Museum,

His coffins were among the first objects in the Egyptian collection, given by two members of the university in 1822, just six years after the Fitzwilliam Museum was founded. The ingenious craftsmen literally left their mark: the research also revealed their finger and palm prints smudged in wet varnish inside the lid.

Another coffin from the collection is being displayed for the first time, revealing the calamitous split from shoulder to shin in the single log which was being hollowed out to hold the mummified corpse. Wood was a precious commodity and many hours of work would have gone into the coffin, so that when it was repaired it was done so by stitching it together with animal sinews, which would have shrunk and pulled the joint tighter as they dried. The repair was so skilfully made that it astonished the curators when they opened the coffin almost a century after it

came into the collection.

One man, whose coffin was made of 74 pieces of wood pegged together with 143 dowels, was in a good position to know about the illicit trade, since the inscriptions reveal that Pakepu – a water carrier who lived in western Thebes in about 700-650 BCE – worked in the funeral industry and was paid to recite prayers and pour offerings for the dead.

Strudwick, and Julie Dawson who led the conservation work, believe that one of the explanations must be that suitable timber was so scarce: one early coffin was made of curved planks cut from a fig tree that must have been bent like a banana, and another made for a



Painted wooden coffin inscribed for a woman with the title 'Lady of the House', called Nakht, thought to be dated from 1985-1773 BC. Photograph: Andrew Norman/The Fitzwilliam Museum A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum A foot board of an Apis bull from an Egyptian cartonnage coffin, from 745-655 BC. Photograph: Jaymes Sinclair/The Fitzwilliam Museum Coffin of a priest called Nakhtefmut. After the mummy was inserted, the slit was laced together and a board inserted under the feet. Photograph: Michael Jones/The Fitzwilliam Museum,

woman called Nakht was made of recycled cedar planks, a particularly coveted wood which had to be imported from Lebanon.

"Any kind of wood was precious and would never just be thrown away," Strudwick said. "Even today if you buy a chair in Egypt it's likely to be metal cleverly painted to look like wood. But did Nakht know that somebody else has once lain in her beautiful coffin – and would she have been horrified?"

comments (17)

• TheLegend
14h ago

So wiz ma auntie Jean

• Powerspike
1d ago

Now you can walk like an Egyptian
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nuhja7y4TM>

• subtilesubversion
1d ago

Considering how they have to live now in a recycled despotism ,
I guess the question of coffin quality remains one of privileges and baksheesh ?

• FukazmeEse
1d ago

Before their dead bodies, the coffins reincarnate.

• Soros2
2d ago

Wow - that puts all the other news in the shade

• HorseCart
2d ago

Coughin' up for a used coffin in Ancient Egypt.
And now you can see it free in a museum in Cambridge, how fine! How good for the wealthy homeowners of that city and its well-paid overspill. I am so glad that they won't

have to go all the way to London just to learn something while they shelter from the rain. The article took so long to get to the obvious fact that "timber was scarce in Egypt" that they would do best to read it backwards from the end.

I'm keen to go to the Museum of Roofing that hasn't opened yet.

- PeterS378

2d ago

many were buried in new and decorated coffins, patched together from pieces of older coffins; some made only a few generations earlier.

Ancient Egyptians in pyramid scheme schocker

- tolpuddler

2d ago

Dunno what coffins cost back then, but if hey were anything like today's prices, I don't blame 'em for nicking old ones to be reused.

- HorseCart tolpuddler

2d ago

In the desert conditions of the Middle-East, I thought it was more normal to just bury someone under a large slab or some stones so that the animals wouldn't get at it. A coffin is a curiously indulgent invention, and you make me wonder which peoples in which part of the world invented coffins.

- SimpleOldSailor

2d ago

In modern Britain the Tories have taken the recycling of death to a far higher level, they flog off entire cemeteries on the cheap to the building developers, a practice started I believe by St. Margaret of blessed memory.

- rden66 SimpleOldSailor

1d ago

you tw@t

- CitizenWise

2d ago

Perhaps there was no option if for whatever reason there was a large number of deaths at any one time.

- vonZeppelin CitizenWise

2d ago

You mean like a grave situation..?

• UnevenSurface vonZeppelin
2d ago

Must have been hard to find the people to dig the graves, if there were so many deaths. Probably just a skeleton staff.

• HopeChest UnevenSurface
2d ago

Always a bare bones budget for important civic work.

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Building site has office workers in stitches

heraldsun.com.au

Elizabeth Quay gives Perth CBD office workers a hilarious sight

December 26, 2015 3:26am

JOE SPAGNOLO State Political Editor PerthNow



The view of Perth's Elizabeth Quay for office workers on Christmas Eve.

THIS sight had CBD workers in stitches on Christmas Eve.

Workers in an office block close to Elizabeth Quay could not believe their eyes when they looked down and saw mulch in a phallic shape at the \$440 million development.

"It was pretty blatant (what it resembled)," the office worker who snapped this picture said. "They were obviously doing a bit of landscaping and dropped a bit of mulch off. It could have been (a coincidence) but we all found it pretty funny.

"Down on ground level you probably wouldn't know."



On the ground the view just isn't that amusing

Premier Colin Barnett and Planning Minister John Day declined to comment.

Elizabeth Quay will officially open to the public on January 29 with a spectacular laser, light and water show.

- Copyright Herald and Weekly Times. All times AEST (GMT +10:00)

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Ecology & Sustainability

EXTINCT ZEBRA BROUGHT BACK FROM THE DEAD

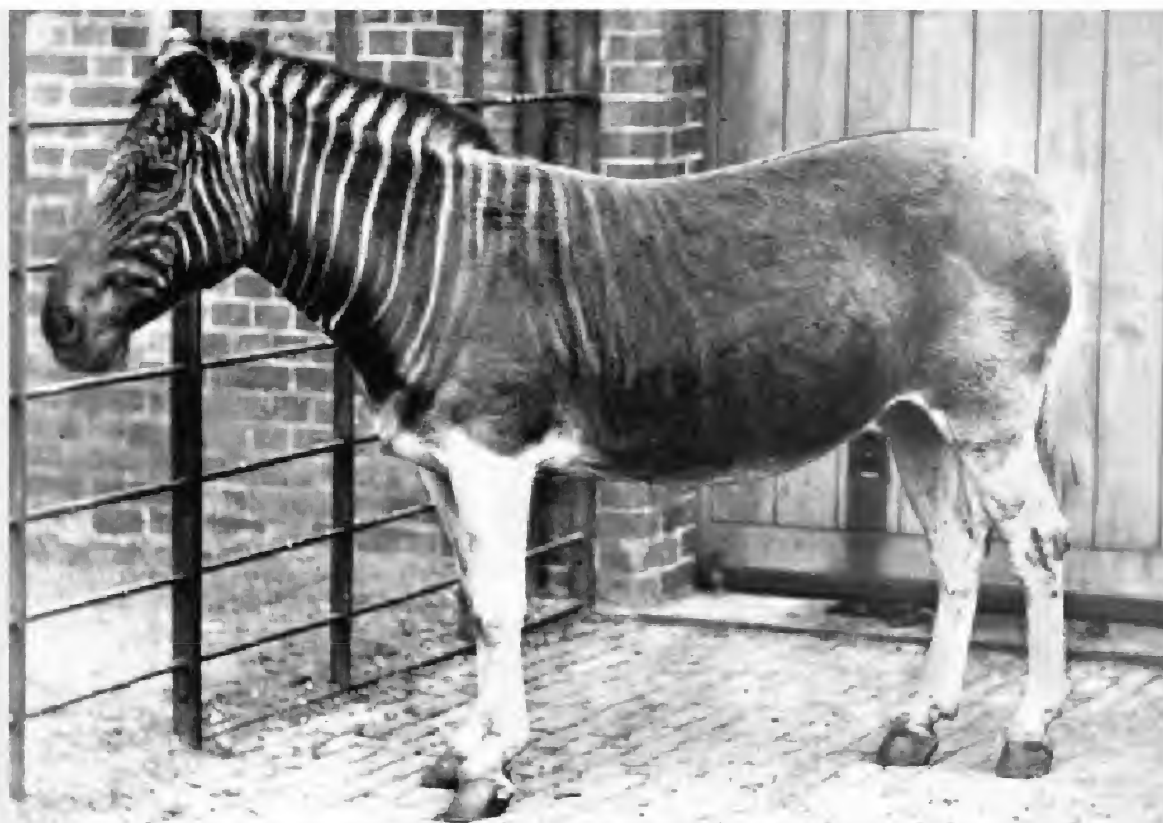
Alison Wilkinson | February 17, 2016 | 15 Comments

[DIGEST: CNN, Daily Mail, Digital Journal, International Business Times]



One hundred fifty years ago, herds of quagga, a relative of the zebra, roamed the South African plains. The last known quagga died in 1883, marking the species' end.

Until now. A team of South African scientists, led by University of Cape Town professor Eric Harley, have recreated the quagga, thanks to DNA and selective breeding.



A quagga specimen in Regent's Park Zoo, London. The hide was used to help reintroduce the species in South Africa. Credit: Source.

The quagga resembles a zebra in the front, complete with its distinct black and white stripes. In the back, the quagga looks more like a horse, its hide a solid brown. The animals were over-hunted: European settlers wanted the grass for their livestock, not the wild animals. The last quagga died in the Amsterdam Zoo in 1883.

Using the preserved hides of 23 quagga, the team of scientists determined that the quagga was a sub-species of the plains zebra. They then selected 19 zebras with the most "quagga-like" characteristics, and allowed them to reproduce. The scientists continued to use selective breeding to mold the animals to the specifications of the quagga.

The project, which has been ongoing for 30 years, has now produced between four and five generations of animals. With each new group, the distinct markings of the quagga have become

more pronounced.

The project has not been without criticism. Opponents believe that resources would be better used in saving species on the brink of extinction, not bringing back an approximation of species that is already gone. They call the project a stunt, saying that while the animal may appear more like a quagga, the project does not take into account the ecological adaptations or behavior differences of the quagga species.

One of the project leaders, Mike Gregor, conceded that the animals "might not be genetically the same," and that "there might have been other genetic characteristics [and] adaptations that we haven't taken into account." But Harley defended the project, stating "If we get an animal which everybody agrees look exactly like the quagga, then indeed we can say that the quagga was never really extinct."



Rau quagga walk in Cape Town's Riebeeck Valley, 2016. Credit: Source.

Because the animals are genetically different, they have been termed "Rau quaggas," after Reinhold Rau, one of the originators of the project. To date, only six of the 100 animals on the project's reserve have reached the necessary level of genetic similarity to hold that title. However, when the number reaches 50, the project intends to move the herd together onto one reserve to live together.

The quagga is not the first attempt at recreating a lost species. In Chad, researchers are reintroducing the Arabian oryx to the wild after the animals went extinct in the 1990s. The project mirrors another project that re-established the Arabian oryx in Oman in the 1980s. That population has since been reclassified from "extinct" to "vulnerable."

"What we're saying is you can try and do something or you could just not," said Gregor. "And I think us trying to do, trying to remedy something, is better than doing nothing at all."

Harley added, "If we can retrieve the animals or retrieve at least the appearance of the quagga. Then we can say we've righted a wrong."

<http://secondnexus.com/ecology-and-sustainability/extinct-zebra-back-from-dead/>
<http://secondnexus.com/ecology-and-sustainability/extinct-zebra-back-from-dead/2/>

Eyam and the Great Plague of 1665

Citation: C N Trueman "Eyam And The Great Plague Of 1665"
historylearningsite.co.uk. The History Learning Site, 17 Mar 2015. 19 Feb 2016.

<http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/stuart-england/eyam-and-the-great-plague-of-1665/>

Eyam, a village in Derbyshire, was also badly affected by the Great Plague of 1665 even though the disease is most associated with its impact on London. The sacrifices made by the villages of Eyam may well have saved cities in northern England from the worst of the plague.

At the time of the plague, the village had a population of about 350. The most important person in the village was the church leader – William Mompesson.

In the summer of 1665, the village tailor received a parcel of material from his supplier in London. This parcel contained the fleas that caused the plague. The tailor was dead from the plague within one week of receiving his parcel. By the end of September, five more villagers had died. Twenty three died in October. Some of the villagers suggested that they should flee the village for the nearby city of Sheffield.

Mompesson persuaded them not to do this as he feared that they would spread the plague into the north of England that had more or less escaped the worst of it. In fact, the village decided to cut itself off from the outside world. They effectively agreed to quarantine themselves even though it would mean death for many of them.

The village was supplied with food by those who lived outside of the village. People brought supplies and left them at the parish stones that marked the start of Eyam. The villagers left money in a water trough filled with vinegar to sterilise the coins left in them. In this way, Eyam was not left to starve to death. Those who supplied the food did not come into contact with the villagers.

Eyam continued to be hit by the plague in 1666. The rector, Mompesson, had to bury his own family in the churchyard of Eyam. His wife died in August 1666. He decided to hold his services outside to reduce the chances of people catching the disease.



Eyam Church where plague victims are buried

By November 1666, the plague was considered at an end. 260 out of 350 had died in the village but their sacrifice may well have saved many thousands of lives in the north of England. Mompesson did survive. He wrote towards the end of the village's ordeal:

Now, blessed be God, all our fears are over for none have died of the plague since the eleventh of October and the pest-houses have long been empty.

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Fake parking tickets 'rickroll' North Carolina motorists

yahoo.com

March 7, 2016 8:51 AM

AP

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (AP) — Motorists in North Carolina who tried scanning fake parking tickets ended getting "rickrolled."

WLOS-TV (<http://bit.ly/21S8BqX>) reports the fake tickets in Asheville included a code that could be scanned with smartphones and pulled up a music video for the 1987 Rick Astley song "Never Gonna Give You Up." The practice of having that video pop up is known as rickrolling.

Associated Press

Asheville's transportation director said the tickets that appeared Friday were clearly fake. The tickets were for \$100. The city's normal parking fine is \$10.

Police say whoever handed out the tickets could be charged with littering.

Parking Services Manager Harry Brown said the fake tickets caused extra work and aggravated those who got the tickets and at least one person tried to pay.

The city is not collecting those fines.

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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Baseball card bonanza: Family scores with rare Ty Cobb find

yahoo.com

By ANDREW DALTON March 3, 2016 7:09 PM

Century-Old Ty Cobb Baseball Cards Found**AP**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — From a crumpled paper bag in a dilapidated house came a baseball-card find of a lifetime. Seven of them actually.

Card experts in Southern California said Wednesday that they have verified the legitimacy — and seven-figure total value — of seven identical Ty Cobb cards from the printing period of 1909 to 1911. Before the recent find, there were only about 15 known to still exist.


Associated Press*Century-Old Ty Cobb Baseball Cards Found*

Joe Orlando, the president of Professional Sports Authenticator in Newport Beach, California, who verified the find, said it is "spectacular" and "miraculous" to have come across such a cache.

"I am not sure if any other baseball card find is more remarkable than this new discovery," Orlando said in a statement.

The family who discovered the cards in a neglected paper bag at the run-down house of a deceased great-grandfather has asked to remain anonymous.

"At first, they thought it was trash," Orlando said. "One of the family members said, 'Let me sift through the contents of this bag,' and thankfully they did."

Joe Orlando, president of Professional Sports Authenticator holds seven rare Ty Cobb baseball cards ...

Publicist Donn Pearlman, who helped announce the finding, said only that they are from a southern state and that the cards were first taken to a dealer in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

That dealer, Rick Snyder of MINT State Inc., said his initial reaction after getting a voicemail from the family was "absolute skepticism."

"I doubted they were authentic because finding seven of these cards at one place at one time



seemed almost impossible," Snyder said. But after examining photos and then finally seeing the cards themselves a week later, he became convinced.

Orlando said he was also dubious at first. But after his office and an outside expert examined the cards, he became a believer.

Cobb's .366 career batting average is the highest in major league history.

[View gallery](#)



This undated photo provided by Professional Sports Authenticator shows one of seven Ty Cobb baseball ...

The cards with the famed Detroit Tigers player come from a lot known as T206, the group most prized by collectors that also includes the Honus Wagner card, arguably the most famous sports card ever.

They say on the back "TY COBB — KING OF THE SMOKING TOBACCO WORLD" in green ink.

The cards' value is sure to shift now that there are so many more in existence, and an exact figure is difficult to pin down. But Orlando said the total worth of the whole cache should exceed \$1 million. It's not yet clear what the family who found them intends to do with them.

On a scale from one to 10, with 10 being mint condition, the cards range from 3.5 to 4.5, which is high for cards that are more than a century old.

"This is one of the greatest discoveries in the history of our hobby," Orlando said.

Associated Press writer Gillian Flaccus contributed to this report.

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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Feral goats bring havoc to New Zealand town - BBC News

bbc.com

By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

- 4 March 2016

A gang of 16 wild goats is causing havoc in a small town on New Zealand's South Island.

The "mob" has been roaming through the streets of Blackball, destroying gardens and local flora as they go, the New Zealand Herald reports. Grey District Council animal control officer Murray Malloch says there's also concern that they might cause a car crash. "Everyone said they're lovely goats though," he tells the paper.

But the herd's days may be numbered. Speaking to Radio New Zealand, Mr Malloch said what started off as a small group of three animals has multiplied over the years, causing an increasing local problem. Residents have two weeks to claim the animals, he says, or they'll be "dealt with", most likely shot for meat.

Putting Blackball's problem into perspective, radio host John Campbell said that 16 animals in a town of 330 people is the per capita equivalent of 67,000 wandering around downtown Auckland. "Don't bother disputing that, it's a fact," he warns listeners.

Feral goats are a long-standing problem in New Zealand, first introduced by Captain James Cook in 1773. The country's Department of Conservation calls the several hundred thousand living wild a threat to native flora, as they're capable of destroying all vegetation in their reach. Hunting and shooting programmes are permitted to control numbers and to preserve sensitive areas.

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Five Surprising Rules for Medieval Monks

medievalists.net

February 19, 2016 By Medievalists.net

By Danièle Cybulskie

The Rule of Saint Benedict was one of the quintessential texts of the Middle Ages. It explicitly lays out how to effectively run and be a part of the ideal monastic community – at least in Benedict's view (there were many other types of monasteries, with their own separate rules). Benedict conscientiously records everything about everything, from eating and sleeping, to clothes, to the order of songs and prayers for services day and night. While the overwhelming focus of *The Rule* is on order and humble obedience so that everyone has a chance to attain perfection, there are a few rules which modern readers may find particularly interesting (I'm using **Bruce L. Venarde's** translation here).



15th century monks singing – in the Noted Breviary Getty Museum MS 24

1. Age ain't nothin' but a number.

For Benedict, age is not nearly as important as wisdom or time spent in the monastic community. Throughout *The Rule*, he admonishes more senior monks to respect and care for their juniors, and he explicitly points out that “On no occasion whatsoever should age decide or predetermine rank, because Samuel and Daniel judged their elders as boys”

(p.203). In fact, he also insists that junior monks be included in important decisions “because often the Lord reveals what is best to a junior brother” (p.29). “Junior” is a rank that could easily mean a more recently-joined monk, not necessarily a younger man, but Benedict insists that monks who are over fifteen should be accepted as full members of the community, and respected accordingly.

2. Novices were required to sign their lives away.

It's not a surprise that monks made a lifetime commitment to their monasteries, but it is interesting that Benedict insists that this commitment is made in writing. If a novice decides to stay on after his probationary year in the monastery, Benedict writes,

He should make a petition concerning this promise of his He should write it with his own hand, or, if he is unlettered, someone he asks should write it and the novice make his mark and place it on the altar with his own hand. (p.189)

Like a secular contract, a novice's pledge of devotion was not binding unless it was signed,

even if the novice could not read the words himself. Even boys who were given to the monastery were required to have a written petition from their guardians; the boy's petition was tied to his hand with an altar cloth when he was presented to the monastic community (p.193). Both boys' and men's petitions were kept by the record-loving Benedictines long after they had been accepted into the community. Even if an errant monk is eventually thrown out, Benedict says, "he should not get back the petition that the abbot took from the altar, which should be kept by the monastery" (p.191).

3. Monastic crafts were great for bargain hunters.

As with many medieval Christian texts, *The Rule* has a very firm focus on humility. The section on artisan monks (Chapter 57) explicitly says that an artistic monk who becomes too prideful of his talent must "be banned from doing his craft" (p.185) until he has regained humility. The artist who is sufficiently humble, however, may have his work sold outside the monastery, although he must be sure that "the wickedness of greed should not creep into [his] pricing" (p.185). Benedict says that in order to not be too prideful, "goods should always be sold for a little less than can be done by others who are laypeople, 'so God may be glorified in all things'" (p.185). The handy upside of this is that it made monastic goods competitive, meaning that the monks could avoid being prideful while still generating business.

4. Strangers had to earn their kisses.

The Rule of Saint Benedict insists that travelers and strangers be welcomed as guests to the monastery "with every service of charity" (p.173). Monks are to meet them "with bowed head or the whole body prostrate on the ground" (p.173) as they would Christ, himself. Guests' hands and feet are to be washed by the abbot, and they are to have a place at the abbot's table at meal times. But, strangely, guests are still to be regarded with some suspicion – at first. When guests arrive and are greeted by the monks, Benedict says, "first they should pray together and thus be united in peace." But, he adds mysteriously, "This kiss of peace should not be offered until the prayer is finished, because of diabolical trickery" (p.173). While Benedict is very forthcoming in other sections of *The Rule*, he does not spell out what diabolical trickery monks should be guarding against. Perhaps, for a community with no real protection against violence within their walls, this communal prayer served as a sort of guarantee that their guests meant no harm.

5. Beware angry eyebrows.

Just as the thought of sin is enough to warrant penance, another monk's angry thought is enough to necessitate asking his forgiveness. Benedict requires his monks to be ever mindful of each other's feelings, "vying with each other for obedience" (p.227). Indeed, the ideal monk should be so very vigilant in his obedience that

if he even vaguely senses anger or distress, however minor, of any senior brother's soul toward him, he should at once, without delay, lie prostrate on the ground at his feet, making satisfaction until the disturbance is healed with a blessing. (p.225)

(This reminds me of **Maria von Trapp** kissing the floor when she sees Sister Berthe coming, “just to save time”.) It seems to me that there might be a lot of prostrate monks at Matins if medieval morning faces were anything like modern ones.

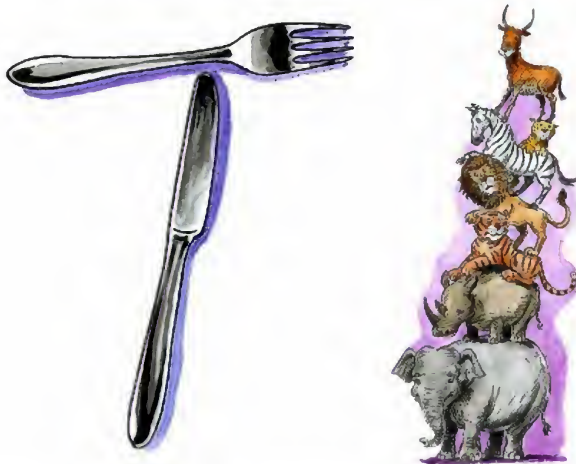
The Rule of Saint Benedict provides a fascinating view into a large and influential section of medieval society through its theological viewpoint and consideration of daily practicalities. As such, it is definitely a worthwhile read for anyone interested in medieval life, monastic or otherwise. I highly recommend **Bruce L. Venarde’s** translation for anyone new to *The Rule*, or for medievalists who love classy-looking editions.

You can follow Danièle Cybulskie on Twitter

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THE EXPANSION of the British Empire opened up new culinary prospects for hungry Flairdevil William Buckland. Buckland was the Dean of Westminster, and one of 19th-century England's most eminent professors of palaeontology and geology. He was also a founder member of the Zoological Society of London and, happily, this enabled him to pursue his lifelong ambition, which was to have a taste of every animal on Earth.

While this goal was, to some extent, in line with the Society's worthy aim of introducing exotic animals into the country to help improve the populace's poor diet, Buckland's obsession with sampling new

critters veered off into a kind of mania. Neither fish, nor fowl, nor furry thing was safe from his 'zoöphagy'. A particular favourite of his were toasted field mice, while other dishes served up at his soirées included porpoise, hedgehog, earwigs, puppy, bear, crocodile, snails, ostrich, and panther. Buckland said that the most disagreeable thing ever ate was a helping of bluebottles, although moles came a close second, apparently.



Buckland's finely tuned palate was put to use in some remarkable ways. Once, he lost his way while journeying overnight to London. He jumped off his horse, and tasted a handful of the soil at his feet, announcing triumphantly, 'Uxbridge!' On another occasion, he visited St. Paul's Cathedral with friends, who speculated that a curious

damp patch inside was in fact the fresh blood of a saint manifesting itself on the floor. The sceptical Buckland promptly licked the mystery liquid off the flagstones, and identified it as bat's urine.

The Gluttonous Idiot

The most bizarre of Buckland's gastronomic adventures happened while he was visiting Edward Harcourt, the Archbishop of York. When his host produced a silver snuffbox containing what he claimed was the preserved heart of the French ruler King Louis XIV, Buckland immediately snatched and wolfed down the shrivelled relic, declaring, 'I have eaten many things, but never the heart of a king.'

By 1850, Buckland was showing signs of a grave mental breakdown. Later, he was placed in a mental asylum at Clapham, where he died in August, 1856.



IDIOTIC OBSESSIONS

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Forgotten fairytales slay the Cinderella stereotype

Philip Oltermann in Regensburg

Friday 26 December 2014 Last modified on Wednesday 20 January 2016

theguardian.com

Stories lost in Bavarian archive for 150 years and newly translated into English offer surprisingly modern characters

The Turnip Princess, by Franz Xaver von Schönwerth



eichenseer in fairytale trail

Once upon a time ... the fairytales you thought you knew had endings you wouldn't recognise. A new collection of German folk stories has Hansel and Gretel getting married after an erotic encounter with a dwarf, an enchanted frog being kissed not by a damsel in distress but by a young man, and Cinderella using her golden slippers to recover her lover from beyond the moon.

The stash of stories compiled by the 19th-century folklorist Franz Xaver von Schönwerth – recently rediscovered in an archive in Regensburg and now to be published in English for the first time this spring – challenges preconceptions about many of the most commonly known fairytales.

Harvard academic Maria Tatar argues that they reveal the extent to which the most influential collectors of fairytales, the Brothers Grimm, often purged their stories of surreal and risqué elements to make them more palatable for children.

"Here at last is a transformation that promises real change in our understanding of fairytale magic," says Tatar, who has translated Schönwerth's stories for a new Penguin edition called *The Turnip Princess*. "Suddenly we discover that the divide between passive princesses and dragon-slaying heroes may be little more than a figment of the Grimm imagination."

Many of the stories centre around surprisingly emancipated female characters. In *The Stupid Wife*, a woman hands out her belongings to the poor but recoups her wealth after scaring off a band of thieves. In *The Girl and the Cow*, the heroine releases her prince after grabbing an axe and whacking off the tail of a large black cat.

Schönwerth's decision to start collecting folk stories was directly inspired by the Grimms, who praised his efforts. In 1885, Jacob Grimm remarked that "nowhere in the whole of Germany is anyone collecting [folklore] so accurately, thoroughly and with such a sensitive ear".

But while the Grimms collected their stories across the social spectrum, mainly in Hesse and Westphalia, Schönwerth's tales were recorded predominantly among workers in Bavaria's Upper Palatine region.

While the Grimms maintained an academic distance when processing their material, their deeply religious Bavarian counterpart had a tendency to dive straight into a world full of

• mcki UnequalBodyValue

27 Dec 2014 8:14

That is fair enough for kids, but must have taken away from the original stories. They should be made available.

• Dadamax mcki

28 Dec 2014 23:34

They are. In every German Library.

• Matthew ReynoldsDadamax

29 Dec 2014 7:05

I have the original Grimm stories in my library, and have since I was 8. They are edited, according to the forward, only to remove the widespread anti-Semitism found in the originals. Otherwise, they retain quite sufficient monstrosity for any child I think.

- The villainess of the Goose Girl is executed by having horses drag her through the street in a barrel full of nails.

- In Iron Hans, the villain is transformed into a dog that is forced to eat burning coals until it dies.

- In 'Cinderella', the helpful birds avenge the kind Cinderella by plucking out the eyes of the wicked step-sisters. This is after said step-sisters cut off half of their foot in order to wear the golden slippers.

Grimm removed mainly references to incest, bestiality, and the like from the original stories. I don't actually believe they made them worse for doing so, nor am I much trustful of the taste of those that would see such things restored.

• Wyisit Alwaysme

27 Dec 2014 7:45

Goldilocks was an old crone who ended up being impaled on the spike on St Paul's, Sleeping Beauty wasn't wakened by a kiss, but after being raped. Cinderella's step-mom got one ugly sister to hack off their heel and the other to hack off their toes so the shoe would fit.

"Two men—generally forgotten nowadays in the United States—deserve the lion's share of the credit for collecting and refining the oral tradition for future generations. No, not the Brothers Grimm. An Italian, Giambattista Basile wrote "Lo Cunto de li Cunte" ("The Tale of Tales"), a collection of fifty stories in Sicilian dialect published in 1636. (For some odd reason, most English-speaking scholars refer to the book as The Pentameron—i.e., half a Decameron.)

The other man had even more impact. Frenchman Charles

Perrault's slender volume came out in 1697 containing but eight tales. Astoundingly, seven of them became classics: "Cinderella," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Blue Beard," "Puss in Boots," "Sleeping Beauty," "Diamonds and Frogs," (Frog-Prince) and "Hop o' My Thumb" (Tom Thumb)." (An Underground Education by Richard Zacks)

• Lukas73 Wyisit Alwaysme
27 Dec 2014 9:20

indeed, and Angela Carter collected some of Perrault's tales, and re-worked them in The Bloody Chamber.

• Lukas73
27 Dec 2014 9:19

sounds interesting, though there are indeed over 50 other similarly gathered collections.

one wonders whether the work of this particular author endorsed by the Nazis and used as propaganda is going to be fatally tainted by that fact. Their magic was pressed into a blood and soil ubermensch mould, but as English readers won't sense that, or pick up on that, then the tales should be much more popular in translation.

• NannaHannah
27 Dec 2014 21:01

Indeed, it was Disney who truly sanitized and diminished the most popular fairy tales into vapid females, saviour males and happy-ever-afters, much to the detriment of multiple generations.

• Chris Moore NannaHannah
28 Dec 2014 11:36

& yet all disney females are heroines, mostly well educated & strong willed..as oppose to 90% of disney male characters who have no personality beyond a smile and often lack basic social skills..
Nothing wrong with wanting happily ever after

• Matthew Reynolds NannaHannah
29 Dec 2014 7:00

I think that is a half-truth. Yes, Disney did sanitize the stories, removing the violence, the sexuality, and the adult situations that mark many of them.

But I don't agree that his females are vapid. Ironically, his most infantile seeming heroine - Snow White - is one of his strongest. Compare Snow White to a female character generally received as strong - Chihiro from 'Spirited Away' - and you see that they have much the same virtue - hard working, virtuous, kind. I think it is a big mistake to measure anyone but certainly a woman by how much martial virtue

that they have. To suggest that martial virtue is the measure of the strength of a character is to agree that women are the weaker sex, as it is really only in the ability to swing a sword that men excel women generally. Only in the most patriarchal societies do we see the measure of a person be solely martial virtue, and to measure the portrayal of strong women mainly by whether they swing a sword is to buy into the ancient Greek idea that the ideal woman is a man with breasts.

- 28 Dec 2014 8:57

Big surprise. Folktales are skewed by the culture and personal biases of the d collectors/publishers. Russian folktales have always had less infantilized, religiously-censored content because the Church and the Academy (personified by 19thc German universities) had less influence than in western Europe. Myriads of strong, interesting female characters (Elena the Wise, Vasilissa the Fair), ambiguous female figures (Baba Yaga is a reality principle of nature--the Crone--who sometimes helps people and sometimes eats them, rather than a Wicked Witch), and polymorphous perversity (supernatural male characters that represent either the internal feminine or the internal masculine in all people). The oral tradition has always been far more complex and interesting than its academic exploiters, whether the exploiters are 19thc German academicians or 20thc formalists or 21stc deconstructionists.

- The1eyedman
28 Dec 2014 11:47

Aesop and a 1001 nights are better read and understood with out various self appointed expert's added opinion.

- 29 Dec 2014 6:53

This is little more than spin.

Any one familiar with the full body of Grimm fairy tales knows that the stereotyping of helpless princesses and the like isn't even part of their body of works.

European fairy tales are largely products of the hard life people of every social class lived. Two thirds of children would see one or both parents die before they reached adulthood. If they could not find a place for themselves, they would be left without protectors, income, or legal recourse. The situation is as dire for the girls as the boys, and though the girls need a legal protector far more than the boys (who need a bride), the tales are not universally or even largely tales of passive girls that wait around for their Prince to come. Instead, they deal with problems like incest, sexual abuse, forced marriages, violent lovers, and dangerous husbands head on with heroines blessed with luck, courage, wit, and magic. For every girl that needs a man's sword to save her, there is another which saves her man - whether brother, father, or lover.

The sort of stories described in the article could as easily have come from German

sources.

There is nothing more here than oikophobia - anything that is familiar has to be held in contempt, anything foreign has to be praised.

• CharleyzencatMatthew Reynolds

29 Dec 2014 8:33

I think this demonstrates how much a story depends on who tells it. For example Marie Antoinette did not say "Let them eat cake". That is the sanitized version for public consumption. What she probably said was "Let them eat caca (shit). History is always told by the victors not the defeated,

• Matthew Reynolds Charleyzencat

29 Dec 2014 10:06

Well, I suppose spin is always how the story is told by those that tell it.

In this case, it's hard to know whether the spin is willful or casual ignorance of the sort of stories typically found in original fairy tale collections. The OP is drawing false contrasts between the famous Grimm collection and the less famous Schönwerth collection. None of the stories in the Schönwerth collection as described present much in the way of a revelation to any student of European fairy tales.

So the question is, what is the motive for drawing the contrast?

The person selling the stories has an obvious motive for recasting them as different than what people know. (Tatar stands to profit if you buy her book.)

The person writing the article has an obvious motive for recasting them as different than what people know. ('Dog bites man' isn't newsworthy.)

The article relies on the reader not knowing many fairy tales in any form, save perhaps a few Disney movies. The writer presumes that the reader hasn't read Hop-O-My-Thumb, The White Cat, the Seven Ravens, King of the Golden Mountain, Molly Whuppie, The Girl and the Dead Man, and so on and so forth. There are literally thousands of fairy tales with hundreds of themes and motifs. Some feature heroines rescued from fate by the arrival of loving protectors. Others feature heroines who must rescue their erstwhile protectors. The Grimm brothers include both types. The writer presumes this likely not only because the writer also hasn't read Andrew Lang's collections and may not even be aware of them, but probably also hasn't even read the Grimm stories and presumes that her readers have not as well.

But average readers in my experience are better educated than journalists.

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A book from the Schönwerth archive.

talking animals and mystical apparitions. Some of Schönwerth's notes suggest that he shared some of his interviewees' belief in creatures such as the Holzmädchen, or woodland maidens, who came to help the peasants at night.

Most of the tales don't set the scene with "Once upon a time", but start *in medias res*: "A prince was ill", "A prince was lost in the wood", or "A king had a son with hair of gold".

Schönwerth's critical revival is largely due to Erika Eichenseer, an 80-year-old retired teacher who has dedicated herself to exploring and promoting his oeuvre since the early 1990s. She runs regular storytelling evenings and theatre workshops inspired by Schönwerth's stories across Bavaria. A fairytale trail in the woodland outside Regensburg, featuring contemporary artists' takes on some of the stories, was unveiled in September.

Having at first been told that Schönwerth's 30,000 pages of literary legacy in the city archives contained only records of local customs and sayings, she eventually unearthed more than 500 fairytales that had been gathering dust for more than 150 years.

The tales she discovered, says Eichenseer, weren't children's fairytales in the way we know them from the Grimms, but stories that explored the transition between childhood and adulthood in fantastical ways.

A number of them feature long periods of sleep, after which the main characters wake up with a changed shape or appearance. "People often say fairytales are cruel," says Eichenseer. "But life is cruel. And children know that."

A 2012 Guardian article on the discovery of Schönwerth's tales triggered an avalanche of requests for interviews and commercial offers from around the globe, including an email from Warner Bros inquiring about film rights. "I just didn't get back," says Eichenseer; her nephew told her the studio mainly made action films, she says.

In the rest of Germany, interest has so far remained subdued. While Tatar insists that no other folklorists from the period measure up to Schönwerth, fellow fairytale expert Jack Zipes has questioned the tales' literary merit, suggesting that there were "literally 50 or 60 collections that are more interesting than Schönwerth's".

The fact that some of Schönwerth's folk tales were republished in the 1930s as part of a Nazi drive to foster "Aryan" traditions may have tainted their legacy in Germany.

Eichenseer has a different theory: "In Germany, there's this attitude that goes, 'We've got our Grimms, and we don't need anybody else.' The Grimms were better at selling themselves. Schönwerth was always a bit too shy."

comments (75)

• onu labu

26 Dec 2014 10:45

"People often say fairytales are cruel," says Eichenseer. "But life is cruel. And children know that."

Spot on. And indeed, why bother with Grimms.

• USANumber1 onu labu

26 Dec 2014 11:08

hope is available on kindle

• DoesNotComputerUSANumber1

26 Dec 2014 11:29

Damn kids with your kindles and your hip hops.

• UnequalBodyValue onu labu

27 Dec 2014 6:21

Time to start showing the kids beheading videos on youtube I guess

• KeithFromAmerica

26 Dec 2014 11:52

Alexander Afanasyev who compiled Russian Fairy Tales also had two sets of tales:

- The non-adult ones that are published as Russian Fairy Tales
- The adult ones that are published as Russian Forbidden Tales.

Cultures have their published children's tales and the "really good tales" passed on by word of mouth.

• NuitsdeYoung

26 Dec 2014 12:08

Sounds exciting!

• Bluthner

26 Dec 2014 13:05

I've said it before: "fairytales" were *not* stories for children. They were folk tales, in the sense that they were the stories people told each other. And the only stories, apart from bible stories, that the folk had to tell. They were lurid and violent and sexy in exactly the same way mass market movies are now lurid and violent and strange: that's what kept people listening. It's not so much that 'life is cruel' it's that human beings, for good or ill, quite like to hear a cruel story.

- OpineOpiner

26 Dec 2014 15:59

"...fellow fairytale expert Jack Zipes has questioned the tales' literary merit, suggesting that there were "literally 50 or 60 collections that are more interesting than Schönwerth's".

Well then, publicize those as well. Apart from anything else, Disney is looking for more ideas. You have been warned.

- NikRaf OpineOpiner

26 Dec 2014 20:28

or is disney looking to sanitises or to falsely remake the fairytale's

- bello NikRaf

26 Dec 2014 21:13

Disney remodels fairy stories to suit the contemporary nuclear family stereotype. The little mermaid is a classic example. The little mermaid version I originally read had no king of the sea but a grandmother mermaid. The little mermaid wanted a human soul instead of dissolving into seafoam at the end of her life. The Evil sea witch and the spell the witch passed on the little mermaid was her dark night of the soul to prove the purity and strength of her love. In the end the mermaid dies but she gains a soul and the spiritual enlightenment that comes with it.

- snapster bello

27 Dec 2014 0:07

... "Disney remodels fairy stories" ... and in Bambi they even changed the kind of deer.

- ruskiny

26 Dec 2014 18:55

"Nazi drive to foster "Aryan" traditions may have tainted their legacy in Germany." Even in the West (EU,UK, Japan, Aus, NZ) we have a population of good little conformists shit scared to think for themselves. Filling kids heads with this sort of BS does not help.

- revken ruskiny

26 Dec 2014 19:26

What are you on going on about!!!!

- ruskiny revken

26 Dec 2014 23:38

We educate children to be non assertive conformists who do not think for themselves. Filling their heads with mumbo jumbo does not help to create rugged individualists who can see through the the "tidal wave of bullshit" they will encounter as they spend their time overworking for a pittance. Their overwork leads to a spoiled planet and lots of money for those who call the shots.

• gerold ruskiny
26 Dec 2014 23:56

We educate children to be non assertive conformists who do not think for themselves

If you are suggesting that these fairy tales teach children to be "good little conformists" then you are sadly mistaken. Have you read any? Didn't think so.

These folk tales are about survival, about using your wits, or your strength, or your beauty, to make your way, no matter how terrifying or dangerous the situation.

• Lintflas
26 Dec 2014 20:54

The fact that some of Schönwerth's folk tales were republished in the 1930s as part of a Nazi drive to foster "Aryan" traditions may have tainted their legacy in Germany.

Ja indeed! Hitler also liked German shepherds and he was a vegetarian, which is why the legacy of dogs is tainted and it explains why we eat so many sausages in Germany today ...

• cyberfysh Lintflas
26 Dec 2014 23:02

This explains the popularity of sausage dogs!

• OpineOpinerLintflas
27 Dec 2014 6:58

Hmmm . . . I hear QE2 adores corgis . . . just sayin'

• Lintflas cyberfysh
27 Dec 2014 9:22

Hans: I don't like it!

Peter: Why?

Hans: Because the Nazis liked it!

Peter: I'm sure the Nazis also liked schnitzel and fresh air.

Hans: Ja really? But ... but I love schnitzel!

Peter: ... and fresh air?

Hans: Ja, I mean ... who doesn't?

Peter: Busted! I knew it all along, you Nazi bastard! Stop breathing, arsehole!
STOP BREATHING!

- Patrick Samphire

26 Dec 2014 23:25

This article puts rather a lot of blame on the Grimms, but their tales are considerably less sanitised than the ones we pass on to children, not just through Disney but also through most of the fairytale books available for children. The Grimms may have edited and partially sanitised their fairytales, but to nowhere near the extent that we have since.

- Juvijim Patrick Samphire

26 Dec 2014 23:35

The Disney versions, all pervasive, are absolutely awful, make me shudder for their blandness

- gerold Patrick Samphire

27 Dec 2014 0:01

Grimms may have edited and partially sanitised their fairytales, but to nowhere near the extent that we have since.

Exactly. It's a sad commentary on the state of our culture that the stepsisters in the Disney cinderella are shown as ugly, while Cinderella is clean and her "rags" are very tastefully tailored. In the story she was always dirty, because she had to sleep in the cinders. ("Cinder -Ella", get it?)

Disney didn't trust the audience to be able to tell who was the hero of the story and who were the villains. They were afraid that if cinderella was dirty, and children identified with her, then she might be a bad influence on them.

Seriously pathetic.

- limpet gerold

27 Dec 2014 2:15

You forgot the most significant change from the Grimm to the Disney version of Cinderella.

Where does the magic come from that transforms Cinderella from a downtrodden serf into a drop-dead-beautiful princess?

Disney: From a twee fairy that comes out of nowhere singing a meaningless song.
Grimm: From the birds of a magic hazel tree that sprouted from a twig given to her by her father (her own choice of gift, her greedy stepsisters having asked for gold

and jewels), which she planted on her mother's grave and watered with her tears.

You can probably guess which version I read to my daughters...

- kora

26 Dec 2014 23:42

because many children know that life is cruel, they don't want to hear or read cruel fairy tales, they would much prefer to read or hear, that all is well in the end-only cruel adults want to torment their children !

- MediaProf kora

28 Dec 2014 8:59

rubish. kids have a peculiar attraction to gore and death. possibly because it means so little to them.

plus, have you noticed the latest crop of popular YA literature? Divergent, Hunger Games, etc. All about horrible dystopian worlds that are cruel.

- franhunny

26 Dec 2014 23:58

The Grimms collected oral folk tales. They wrote them down, edited them, but did not come up with them. They are editors, not authors.

On the other hand we have literary fairy-tales like Andersen's ... (or for example Wilde, The Happy Prince). That is quite a different kettle of fish.

Schönwerth has been doing the same thing as the Grimms, just in another region of Germany. He was a linguist and a folklorist, interested in the customs and oral traditions of his region, not a writer of fairy-tales. What made him interesting for the Nazis was his try to link his region's traditions with the Teutons. The Nazis loved anything teutonic. But I think he is not forgotten because of the Nazi's interest in him. He just had a smaller collection than the Grimms (he collected in a smaller region), his theory to link things to the Teutons has been disproven and the Grimms were rather well-known and spread their collection of fairy-tales further and faster than him (so he had more successful rivals). I do not think he is systematically shunned.

- MGFMSKM franhunny

27 Dec 2014 1:07

The Grimms were, in theory, editors, but it's well known that they often made substantial changes to the tales they collected. A comparison between the first edition (1812) and the last (1857) will reveal just how extensive this was. As a rule, the stories were gradually sanitized and made more child-friendly and/or representative of traditional/conservative 19th century German values.

- franhunny MGFMSKM

27 Dec 2014 9:20

Editors change stories, too ...

• Goresh franhunny

27 Dec 2014 13:14

Editors fix grammar, misspellings etc.

Extensive rewrites are the job of authors.

• omoba4real

27 Dec 2014 0:27

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our community standards. Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see our FAQs.

• MGFMSKM

27 Dec 2014 1:04

I find it a little unlikely that Jacob Grimm praised Schönwerth in 1885, given that he'd been dead for over 20 years...

• FrogStar MGFMSKM

27 Dec 2014 2:51

Well it could be a typo, or in a posthumous publication such as *Kleinere Schriften*

• Thomas Borgsmidt MGFMSKM

27 Dec 2014 3:07

Well, it is a fairytale....

• Lukas73 MGFMSKM

27 Dec 2014 9:22

ah, but perhaps Jacob Grimm had come back as a toad...

• nilpferd

27 Dec 2014 1:57

"Here at last is a transformation that promises real change in our understanding of fairytale magic," says Tatar

That is possibly overstating it a little. I have the Schönwerth collection in German and while many of the stories have memorable or unusual elements, and are told with admirable concision and clarity, they are not really "challengers of preconceptions" we might have about fairytales. Similar elements and styles occur in numerous other collections of tales told in the 19th and 20th C, particularly from France and Italy.

By the way, I hope that Turnip Princess tale linked to above isn't from this new collection, as it has been (in my opinion) in parts so translated as to obscure the point and the charm of the original tale.

• Lukas73 nilpferd
27 Dec 2014 9:21

true, that's why Schönwerth could be so readily adapted by the Nazis. For all its transformations, his work promotes traditional German values.

• nilpferd Lukas73
27 Dec 2014 13:37

his work promotes traditional German values..

Hardly surprising though. In one way or another all of the European 19-20th. C. transcriptions of fairytales reflect a desire to catalogue traditional values, that was one of the main reasons they were recorded in the first place, to preserve ways of life being put under threat by urbanisation and cultural change.

As Italo Calvino notes in his essay *The Dragon Tradition*, the impulse for such conservative work often comes from the periphery of culture- the backwaters- as it is here that the impending change (and, more importantly, the impending loss) is first sensed. In FZ v. Schönwerth's case, Oberpfalz.

I can't say I've come across any "reluctance" towards the Schönwerth tales here on account of their promotion by the Nazis, and their content isn't, as far as I have read them, intrinsically brown- as you said below, they were "pressed into the blood and soil übermensch mould".

• FrogStar
27 Dec 2014 2:55

Apart from entertainment value, I would suggest the folk tales are probably good as a way of getting people to think about how they might react in given threatening situations.

Also good for kids, in that case !

• Taptoe
27 Dec 2014 6:19

Its grim in the Uk.. are we living in a fairytale?...Will there be a happy ending...will evil be vanquished..tune in next week for the next instalment of THE UK IN CRISIS

• UnequalBodyValue
27 Dec 2014 6:20

the Brothers Grimm, often purged their stories of surreal and risqué elements to make them more palatable for children.

_ The monsters!

Four-year-old sentenced to life in prison for murder in Egypt

msn.com

Retrieved Feb 19th 2016 at 11:30 pm PST

An Egyptian court has sentenced a four-year-old boy to life in prison for "committing murder" when he was aged just one.

Ahmed Mansour Karni was not in court on Tuesday when he was convicted of four counts of murder, eight of attempted murder, one vandalism of property and another count of threatening soldiers and police officers - all before his second birthday.

Ahmed was one of 115 defendants who were all handed life sentences at the same time at the court in western Cairo for crimes allegedly committed in early 2014.

His defence attorney, Faisal al-Sayd, told the *Jerusalem Post* the child's name had been added to the list by mistake but the court did not pass Ahmed's birth certificate on to the judge to prove he was born in September 2012.

He said: "The child Ahmed Mansour Karni's birth certificate was presented after state security forces added his name to the list of accused, but then the case was transferred to the military court and the child was sentenced in absentia in an ensuing court hearing.

"This proves that the judge did not read the case".

Another lawyer said the case showed "there is no justice in Egypt".

He said: "The Egyptian scales of justice are not reversible. There is no justice in Egypt. No reason. Logic committed suicide a while ago. Egypt went crazy. Egypt is ruled by a bunch of lunatics."

Egypt has been ruled by a military dictatorship under President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi since Mohammed Morsi's elected government was ousted in 2013.

Approximately 40,000 opposition supporters are currently in jail as the government cracks down on dissent.

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POLISH AND POLISH-AMERICAN VAMPIRES: A TALE OF TWO CENTURIES

December 23, 2011 02:19:49

Posted By Michael Bell

<http://apps.vampiresgrasp.com/Blog/index.cfm?e=74147&d=12/23/2011&s=POLISH%20AND%20POLISH-AMERICAN%20VAMPIRES%3A%20A%20TALE%20OF%20TWO%20CENTURIES>

I recently found a newspaper article from 1874 that describes a vampire incident involving a prominent family in Poland (which was part of Germany at that time). The case was so similar to one that I had encountered almost exactly three years ago that I decided to compare the two. One of the remarkable things about the latter is that it occurred in Winona, Minnesota, in 1922. You read correctly: in the United States, during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The Winona case unfolded over a period of less than a week, but each of the four successive newspaper articles that described the event added new information. The first revelation of this event appeared in the Winona Republican-Herald on January 5, 1922. Following is the first of several installments concerning this fascinating narrative:

GRAVE TO BE OPENED TO FIND WHETHER BODY OF GIRL HAS BEEN MOLESTED

Police and Cemetery Officials to Determine
Truth or Falsity of Rumor That Girl's Body
Was Beheaded in Superstitious Belief That
Such Action Would End Series of Deaths in
Local Family—Parents of Girl Deny Any
Knowledge of Body Having Been Molested
—Sexton Finds Two Graves Tampered With
—Five Sons Have Died Since Death of Girl
About Five Years Ago.

FANTASTIC SUPERSTITION BLAMED

To determine whether the body of Miss Frances Bloch, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bloch, 879 East Sanborn street, has been exhumed, and, according to persistent rumors, beheaded as a means of ending illness and death in the family, Winona police and officials of the St. Mary's Cemetery association will tomorrow re-open two graves in the cemetery which, according to Sexton George Kammerer, former chief of police here, have been tampered with in the past 10 days.

No permits to open any of the Bloch family graves have been issued to anyone to date, Coroner E. M. McLaughlin stated this morning. If the graves have been tampered with or molested, local officials declared, it has been in violation of the law, and the offenders are liable to heavy punishment.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Bloch deny any knowledge that their daughter's grave has been opened and the body decapitated.

The action of the police and cemetery officials were decided upon today in an effort to determine the truth or falsity of reports which have been current for several days. The rumors, some of which are highly fantastic, have found wide currency.

The superstition which is said to have formed the basis for the reported act is one that is said to be common among the peasant classes in many sections of Europe.

In families where death claims several, it is sometimes believed that the spirit of the first to die is responsible for the death of the others. By cutting off the head of this body, according to the superstition, and placing it in another part of the casket, the powers of the dead body are ended. The belief varies in different sections of the continent and among various classes of people.

To be continued . . .

A TALE OF TWO CENTURIES - PART FOUR

January 19, 2012 09:03:59

Posted By Michael Bell

<http://apps.vampiresgrasp.com/Blog/?d=01/2012>

The second newspaper article concludes:

J. W. Jereczek, 300 Mankato avenue, at whose establishment the bodies of the Bloch children were embalmed, stated also that the bodies should be in a fairly good state of preservation. The location of the graves, he said, might hurry decomposition somewhat, but the bodies, he said, should hold their shapes for at least three years, indicating that in his belief complete decomposition has not yet come about.

Police Doubt Story

In the light of these statements, police are inclined to believe that unless unusual conditions have hurried the decomposition of the Bloch bodies, Mr. Bloch's story is incorrect in this respect or he did not see the remains as he said he did.

While Mr. Bloch has already confessed to having opened the graves without authority for so doing, the investigation tomorrow will determine whether any further laws have been violated. County Attorney

Simpson stated today that he is prepared to issue warrants whenever complaints are made and declared that if a crime has been committed, prosecution will be pushed.

So, Bloch confesses but the cops still don't believe him. And the guy who owns a furniture store-slash-undertaking business—a forensic authority, for certain—doubts that a body could decompose so quickly? But wait, there's more, as the third installment begins, only adding to the melodrama:

Bodies Probably To Be
Exhumed On Monday, Is
Police Decision Today

Chief Riebau Says Graves Will Be Opened and
Bodies Inspected to Satisfy Public Curiosity
Unless Later Developments Make Such
Action Inadvisable—No Prosecution Con-
templated Since Law Does Not Apply to
Present Situation—Merely a Question of
Whether or Not Public is to be Informed
Positively as to What Happened at Cemetery
—Would Ascertain Definitely if Bodies Were
Disturbed—Officials Say Matter is Up to
Police.

BLOCH SAYS HE FOUND SKELETONS

The graves of Miss Frances Bloch and her brother Joseph in St. Mary's cemetery here will be opened Monday in order to ascertain definitely for the satisfaction of public curiosity in what condition the bodies are, unless later developments indicate that such an action would be inadvisable, Police Chief H. C. Riebau announced [sic] this afternoon.

Tune in next time to see what twists this true tale takes.

A TALE OF TWO CENTURIES - PART THREE
January 12, 2012 12:51:33
Posted By Michael Bell
<http://apps.vampiresgrasp.com/Blog/?d=01/2012>

The newspaper coverage of the exhumation in Winona, Minnesota, in 1922, was featured for a second day, revealing information unknown the previous day. Following is a continuation of these new revelations:

This morning, however, new developments, in the form of statements by local embalmers and cemetery caretakers, caused authorities to doubt certain parts of Bloch's story, and this afternoon it was again decided to re-open the graves and learn exactly what had been done.

Mr. Bloch, who is 69 years old and a retired member of the Winona police force, confessed to Chief Riebau last night that he had been led to believe, by the repeated suggestions of superstitious friends, that if the head of his daughter, Frances, was cut off from the body, the powers of her spirit to "call" the spirits of other members of the family would be ended. Four of his five sons, he said, had already died since Frances' death a little more than five years ago, and his fifth son, Frank, was then lying at death's door.

On Dec. 27, he said, he and Kobus, whom he hired for a few dollars to assist him, went to the cemetery. The grave of the dead girl was opened. The rough box, he said, was in good condition, but the coffin within was decayed and fallen to pieces. Nothing remained of the girl's body, he said, but the skeleton, and for this reason the grave was refilled, he declared, without mutilating the body.

"Frankie kept getting poorer and poorer," Mr. Bloch went on. "We knew he was going the same way the others went, and so on Friday, the day before he died, Kobus and I went back. This time we opened Joseph's grave. Joseph died about four years ago, but there was nothing left of him either but the skeleton. We filled the grave again without doing anything to the body, and the next morning Frankie died."

"Was Just About Crazy"

Tears rolled down Mr. Bloch's cheeks as he spoke, and at times his voice sank to a whisper.

"I was just about crazy," he added, "and I was ready to try anything to stop all these deaths. They told us that maybe Mrs. Bloch or one of our four married daughters, still living, would be next. One of them is sick now. I didn't know that it was wrong to open one of my own family graves. I'll never believe anybody again."

The statement made by Bloch, with which the opinions of local undertakers clash, was that to the effect that both bodies had been decomposed to such an extent that nothing but the bones remained.

Experts Give Opinions

O. P. Munson, sexton of Woodlawn cemetery, who has exhumed many bodies which have been interred for varying periods of time, stated this morning that he has never in his experience found a body which

has been completely decomposed in a period of five years.

“The average body is in a fairly good state of preservation at the end of such a short time,” he declared. “It ordinarily requires from 10 to 12 years for decomposition to be so complete that nothing but bones remain. The location of the grave and the soil that surrounds it are factors to be considered, but on a hillside such as Woodlawn or St. Mary’s, it should take from 8 to 10 years at least.

George Hillyer, proprietor of Hillyer’s Furniture company and undertaking establishment, stated this morning that an ordinary body, with no embalming whatever, ought not to be completely decomposed within a period of five years.

A TALE OF TWO CENTURIES - PART TWO

January 3, 2012 11:03:11

Posted By Michael Bell

Following is the conclusion of the first newspaper article:

<http://apps.vampiresgrasp.com/Blog/?d=01/2012>

Fives Sons Have Died

Since the death of Frances Bloch, more than five years ago, five sons in the Bloch family have succumbed to an illness which official death certificates characterize as tuberculosis. The last son, Frank, 19 years old, died early Saturday morning and was buried yesterday in St. Mary’s cemetery. Four daughters, married, and living in their own homes, survive. The dead are: Frances, Joseph, August, Paul, John and Frank.

It was the belief of the police today that a mistake was made in the identity of the graves on the night of Dec. 27, when the first grave was molested. This grave was that of one of the sons. On Saturday night, it is believed, the person or persons hired to do the work, returned to the cemetery and carried out the purpose of their errand..

Police Have Clues.

Police Chief H. C. Riebau stated this afternoon that clues were in his possession as to the identity of the person who carried out the plan. The investigation tomorrow, however, will determine whether or not the work was carried out according to the rumor.

When questioned last Saturday, Mr. and Mrs. Bloch denied any belief whatsoever in the superstition. Both declared, however, that they did not believe any disease of the lungs has been responsible for the deaths of their children. They declared that no other members of their family had ever been afflicted with such illness and stated that it was more probable to them that stomach trouble had caused the succession of deaths.

The next day, new information about the event was published. Following is the first part of that newspaper article:

Police Reach Decision
To Open Graves Here To
Verify Man's Confession

Authorities To Carry Out Original Plan Despite
Claim of Thomas Bloch That He Did Not
Molest Bodies When He Opened Graves—
Will Ascertain Reliability of Bloch's Story
That He Found Bodies Decomposed and
Nothing But Skeletons in Caskets—Local
Embalmers Say Bodies Ordinarily Would
Not Decompose in Five Years—Bloch Tells
Police Superstitious Friends Made Repeated
Suggestions That Led Him to Take Action.

SAYS HE WAS DRIVEN ALMOST CRAZY

The graves of Frances and Joseph Bloch in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery here will be re-opened tomorrow, it was announced by the police today, to establish definitely the reliability of a confession made last night by Thomas Bloch, 879 East Sanborn street, the father of the dead.

In his confession, Mr. Bloch told Police Chief H. C. Riebau that while he, with the assistance of Thomas Kobus, 268 Mankato avenue, had opened both graves last week, neither of the corpses within had been disturbed. The police and cemetery officials had previously intended to examine the graves this morning, but following the confession, the plan was dropped.

Ukrainians living on Lenin Street have decided to change it - to Lennon

Street

14:17, 4 Mar 2016 Updated 14:20, 4 Mar 2016 By Sam Webb

mirror.co.uk

From Lenin to Lennon: Ukraine changes street name from Russian tyrant to honour former Beatle



Getty Images

In: John Lennon

A street named after Russian dictator Vladimir Lenin is being changed to honour former Beatle John Lennon.

The villagers of Kaliny in the Zakarpattia Oblast region - furious at the Russian-backed rebels took over the Crimean peninsula - have chosen to scrap a street name honouring the Communist leader and instead commemorate the peace-loving writer of 'Imagine'.

Regional governor Hennadiy Moskal is said to have initiated the change as part of a programme to wipe out all Russian

communist place names.

Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko passed new laws in last year ordering public officials to remove all statues, monuments and place names linked to the Soviet regime.

A list of more than 900 towns and villages currently named after Soviet figures has been drafted.



Getty Images

Out: Vladimir Ilich Lenin

News of the change to celebrate former Beatle John emerged on the Kaliny village website.

One user said: "It is more modern but it will help people because they (Lenin and Lennon) sound so similar."

Violation of the new law carries a penalty of a potential media ban and a prison sentence of up to five years.

Another town in the regiob, Mezhgorye, will rename a street formerly honouring Red Army commander Nikolay Shchors.

The street will now be named for Viktor Markus, a Ukrainian soldier killed while fighting separatist rebels.

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Is this the ghost of a pub landlord who hanged himself?

07:08 EST, 26 October 2015 |

dailymail.co.uk



Eerie: This image appears to show a ghostly man behind the bar at the Golden Fleece pub in York. Haunted: The pub dates back around 500 years and staff have reported a number of spooky phenomena. Interior: The bar at the Golden Fleece, where bar staff say they sometimes feel a tightening sensation around their neck. Discovery: Ghost hunters Steve and Susanne Taggart who captured the bizarre sight. They are pictured with former Most Haunted star Jason Karl (right)

Is this the ghost of a pub landlord who hanged himself? Spooky figure of a man is pictured in supposedly haunted bar

- Paranormal investigators visited the 'haunted' Golden Fleece pub in York
- One captured a photograph of a large man's shadow behind the bar
- A landlord at the ancient pub is said to have hanged himself on premises
- Staff have reported a tightening feeling around their neck

Daily Mail

.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

By Hugo Gye for MailOnline

Ghost hunters claim to have photographed the spirit of a pub landlord who hanged himself while investigating reports that the bar is haunted.

Workers at the Golden Fleece, a centuries-old pub in York, say they have felt their necks tighten while working behind the bar, and seen glasses mysteriously swept off shelves with no explanation.

And when a team of paranormal investigators visited, supernatural specialist Susanne Taggart claimed to have caught the dead landlord's ghost on camera for the first time.

The image appears to show the shadow of a man behind the bar, even though there is no source of light pointing in the right direction.

Ms Taggart, 51, said: 'It was very dark and it clearly is the lurking shape of big person as you can see the head and shoulders, but the only person in the shot was the girl behind the bar and you can see her on the left. She confirmed to us that no one else was there with her.'

'There was a kitchen door behind the figure but it is completely obscured by this shadow. None of us could believe it. Quite a few people in our group were shook by the photo and we found it very unsettling.'



© Mercury Press & Media Ltd

She added: 'Despite it being very creepy, I thought there must be a rational explanation. However, a friend of mine analysed the picture and said that there was no light penetrating the shadow, it was just a dense black shape. That was very unsettling.'



© Kalyan, Mercury Press



© Mercury Press

'This is the one piece of footage we have ever found that we are not able to debunk. There is no explanation that I can think of. There was no one stood there and yet the shape of a person is clear and it is in the same spot where stories say the landlord hanged himself.'

'If anyone out there can look at it and provide an explanation then I would be very interested in hearing it. It is certainly the best evidence of spirits that I have ever seen.'

During the evening's investigation the team felt sudden cold chills in some areas of the building, and a child's voice was heard at one point.

A spokesman for the Golden Fleece, which was once featured on TV show *Most Haunted*, said: 'It is no surprise that people who live and work in the Golden Fleece have some hair-raising tales to tell. In fact several of them have described how their hair was pulled as if by invisible hands.'

'There are a number of accounts of staff who have felt a sudden tightening around their neck while standing at the bar - the very bar where, it is said, an earlier landlord hanged himself.'

'In addition to these sightings there have been numerous other disturbing occurrences reported over the years - doors banging, mysterious footsteps on the stairs, strange lights, cold spots and temperature changes, candles that light themselves, beds that move and



doors that slam.'

Landlord Steph Yates added: 'The most scary thing is that the ceiling above the bar is a false ceiling and there is a hook hidden above there - that is where the landlord is supposed to have hanged himself.

'The ghost of the hanged landlord is quite well known to us, though no one knows the full story of who or when it was. People have experienced lots of very freaky things around the bar, like hands around their

throat and glasses being knocked off shelves.

'It's a very, very creepy place. I never believed in any of that stuff before I took over the pub but there has been so many weird goings on that now I am sure there is something odd about the pub.'

Comments (82)

Dave, Cocermouth, 3 months ago

Any publicity is good publicity, even more so when it is as free as this story is.

Dear Prudence, Abbey Road, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

Yes, of course it is

David Gillies, San Jose Costa Rica, Costa Rica, 3 months ago

The question "is the the ghost of...?" has one answer and one answer only: no. Unless you count "don't be a dolt" as an answer.

Paulie8272, Leeds, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

I can appreciate that in less enlightened times that some people could believe in the existence of ghosts. There is no place for such a ridiculous concept in this day and age.

Lee, St Pardoux Isaac, France, 3 months ago

And yet millions believe in god yet know one has actually seen him/her.

conor, Warrington, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

papaknowsbest, Gosport, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

I ddon't believe in ghosts either, although I have seen/witnessed some events which defy explanation and rationalisation..... Sunday, in the peace and tranquility of our "Play Room" at

home (if such things exist with 5 rampant grandchildren) a Champagne Cork popped out of the floor and riciched around the room, off ceiling and walls. The cats could not believe their eyes or ears and made themselves scarce..... Iy scared the hell out of my daughter's partner, who actually caught the projectile in its last trajectory! He thought I had fired the missile, but NO!..... The kids were out in the conservatory with the other adults, so it was me (watching Rugby) and him..... THEN THE SECOND CORK POPPED!..... from the floor in more or less the same place (polished wood floor, no carpet)..... The only other person in the house takes the form of my wife's ashes, awaiting my death, so they can be mixed and scattered over her favourite glen..... I shall do the Lottery tomorrow!

Amrik, Birmingham, 3 months ago

FAIL!!!!!! ;-)

Susanne Taggart, manchester, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

Please remove the picture with Jason Karl as it us irrelevant to this story

woodenheart, kendal, 3 months ago

It's Ronnie Pickering.

cipher, nottingham, United Kingdom, 3 months ago

oh ffs

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The Vocabularist: Grotesque wasn't always an insult - BBC News bbc.com

The Vocabularist Words unpicked

• 16 February 2016



Many artists and others were lowered in to see the decorations in the "grottoes"

In recent days an opponent of Hillary Clinton was accused of "grotesque misogyny" while the lack of broadband in rural areas was branded a "grotesque problem". But the word didn't always mean something bad, writes Trevor Timpson.

Grotesque is one of those words which people making public statements reach for when ordinary insults just will

not do. But it was not always an insult.

Its history started in about 1500 in Rome - with an event that affected aesthetics as deeply as the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb.

The enormous chambers of Nero's unfinished palace, the Golden House, had lain buried and forgotten, until someone reportedly fell into them through a broken ceiling.

Many people, including famous artists, were lowered in, to wonder at the painted decorations on the walls.

Because they went in from above, the chambers were dubbed "grotte" - Italian for caves or cellars, derived from the Latin *cripta*, which is the Greek *krypta*, meaning hidden place.

The decorations were much admired, and patrons began to commission "grottesco" imitations - notably the Vatican loggias by Giovanni da Udine, whose name is scratched among the Golden House frescoes.

Amid elaborate scrolls, arabesques and swags of flowers, the decorations in the Golden House included strange and half-human figures and mythical animals.

But they had a certain delicacy and order; it took time for the word to acquire the connotations of tangled grossness which we associate with it today.

Nevertheless, by 1667 Milton was writing in *Paradise Lost* of greenery "grotesque and wild" obstructing Satan's entry into Eden. And 18th Century London entertainments regularly advertised knockabout "added scenes, in grotesque characters".

Across Europe the meaning became rolled up with other trends in art. These included the Mannerists, most famously Giuseppe Arcimboldo, with his portraits built up from pictures of fruit, and the gargoyles and weird manuscript decorations of the Middle Ages.

By the early 20th Century the word "grotesque" could break away from aesthetics on occasion, and be used to decry an opponent's arguments. In 1913 a letter in the Sunday Times called the comparison of historic heroes with champions of women's suffrage "grotesque".

In 1985 Labour's Neil Kinnock famously used "grotesque chaos" in his attack on the Militant Tendency.

He may well have coined the phrase afresh, though it had been used before. It appeared in a book review in the Sunday Times in 1964. And "chaos" comes from a Greek word meaning "gaping void".



Neil Kinnock in 1985: He was not the first person to use the phrase "grotesque chaos"

Image copyright Alamy

Image caption

The Vocabularist

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'Hairy Panic' (a Plant) Grips Australian Town : DNews

discovery.com

Feb 18, 2016 11:31 AM ET // by AFP



Hairy panic is paralyzing parts of an Australian town — but it's not quite the existential nightmare it sounds, just a fast-growing tumbleweed.

Homes in Wangaratta are being inundated with the evocatively named plant pest, with some residents having to spend hours digging out their driveways.

Townfolk are no stranger to the native prickly menace, usually swept in by

winds during the hot and dry summer months.

But this season has seen an unusual amount of hairy panic — known scientifically as *Panicum effusum* — with hundreds of thousands of the fuzzy, yellowish plants swamping the entrances of homes, driveways and backyards. Residents spend hours clearing the weeds, piles of which can reach up to the roof.

"It's a fairly significant problem," said Rod Roscholler, an administrator for Wangaratta, 250 kilometers (150 miles) northeast of Melbourne.

"For whatever reason, the climate, the weather, the temperatures, the rains, must have combined for it to be a 'bumper crop' this year," he said on Thursday.

"It's physically draining and mentally more draining," Pam Twitchett told the Seven news network.

Carpenter Jordan Solimo said the "hundreds of thousands" of tumbleweed, which contains toxins that can be deadly for sheep, were so numerous he was not able to open his backyard door.

"They're covering the front of a couple of people's (houses)," Solimo said, adding that the phenomenon started around Christmas. "A lot of people's backyards get filled up with them. I tried to get out of my back door the other day but I couldn't, it (the backyard) was just full of tumbleweed."

Solimo said he would wait for winds to temporarily move the thin, wire-like grass or use a leaf-blower to clear them away, "and then it's all good before the next lot comes."

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Hannah Mary Tabbs A black murderess in racist 1800s US

22 February 2016 Magazine

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35616529>



Hannah Mary Tabbs and her supposed accomplice's mugshots from 1887 - photo by Philadelphia City Archives

In 1887, the discovery of a torso near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, touched off a sensational murder trial. Kali Nicole Gross, author of *Hannah Mary Tabbs and the Disembodied Torso*, went in search of the woman at the centre of it all.

When a local carpenter on his way to work discovered a headless, limbless, racially ambiguous torso in a pond just outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1887, it terrified the residents in the surrounding communities.

Though it seemed like the kind of crime likely to go unsolved, police quickly zeroed in on a black migrant named Hannah Mary Tabbs. Her trial lasted for months with an outcome few could have predicted.

Dubbed a "murderess", Tabbs and the torso case would be front-page news for months because it unearthed otherwise forbidden subjects such as adultery, sex and domestic violence. The victim was thought to be her lover, but Tabbs blamed an 18-year-old mixed-race teenager named George Wilson for the crime. Their fates became intertwined within the brutally racist criminal justice system of the

time.

After first reading about the case in a century-and-half old Eastern State Penitentiary scrapbook, I was desperate to learn more about Tabbs, a married woman who at the very least had been involved in a deadly, adulterous love triangle with a man ten years her junior.



An old scrapbook at Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia offered clues – photo by Albert Vecerka

Tabbs was a kind of black woman that I hadn't encountered before while studying history. She knew how to put up a front when it came to respectability, but she also knew how to manipulate, threaten, and brutalise people to get what she wanted - whether it was to be feared or to engage in a risqué affair.

After I decided to write about her, there were many moments when other scholars belittled the project. Some ridiculed the notion of documenting the story outright while many publishers passed on the project because Tabbs was "not sympathetic". I especially chafed at this. Was Lizzie Borden expected to be sympathetic? Why ask this of Tabbs? Did black women have to be purely good or purely victims for a mainstream audience to care about their history?

But perhaps more importantly, why did they see her as undeserving of sympathy?

Hannah Mary Tabbs was born in the 1850s in a slave state and grew into her womanhood during the nation's bloody Civil War. When she met her husband, a man 15 years older, she was alone in Baltimore, Maryland, with her mulatto "niece" in tow. Some questioned whether Tabbs was the girl's mother. If so, I wondered about the circumstances of conception - had she been raped or otherwise exploited?

A TRIAL FOR MURDER.

**A Brutal Crime Committed in Philadelphia—
Newspaper Notes and Comments.
Regular Correspondence of THE FREEMAN.**

PHILADELPHIA, June 6.—Your correspondent attended the closing scenes in the trial of George H. Wilson, indicted for the murder of Wakefield Gaines. The crime, committed on Feb. 16, at the house of one Mary Hannah Tabbs, 1642 Richards street, this city, was one of unparalleled brutality. After felling Gaines to the floor with a chair, the prisoner dragged the body down the

A story in the New York Freeman dated March 1887 - photo by New York Freeman

Her exploits in Philadelphia, particularly how she bullied, and viciously and routinely beat those in her family and neighbourhood, all gesture toward eyes that have seen too much. Her ability to wield violence in these ways suggested past victimization as much as it testified to her brutality.

I tried to uncover as much as I could about her early history, but Tabbs didn't make this easy. She used aliases, gave false information about her nativity, changed her age, and generally relied on lies and misdirection to reach her goals.

Her prison records and a number of press accounts listed her birthplace as Virginia. She told authorities she was from Richmond, but there was no trace of her at the Virginia Historical Society and other area archives.

I read every press account imaginable, in papers from Philadelphia to Ohio to Missouri to New York. Surprisingly, it was a German language paper that revealed she was in fact from Ann Arundel County, Maryland. It was at the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis that I finally found her marriage records and her maiden name - Hannah Ann Smith.

Her Civil War Widow's Pension file from the National Archives in Washington, DC, would be my greatest find - it contained detailed affidavits from Tabbs and those who knew about her married years, it had a copy of her marriage certificate from 1874, and it had her signature.

For me, her story, her bad acts, and her flaws showcase her humanity and her profound vulnerability. In an era when black women's bodies were never their own, there were all kinds of reasons being feared was a good thing. But her case also opened a window into the impact of biased justice and its role in urban

crime that are still very much at play today.

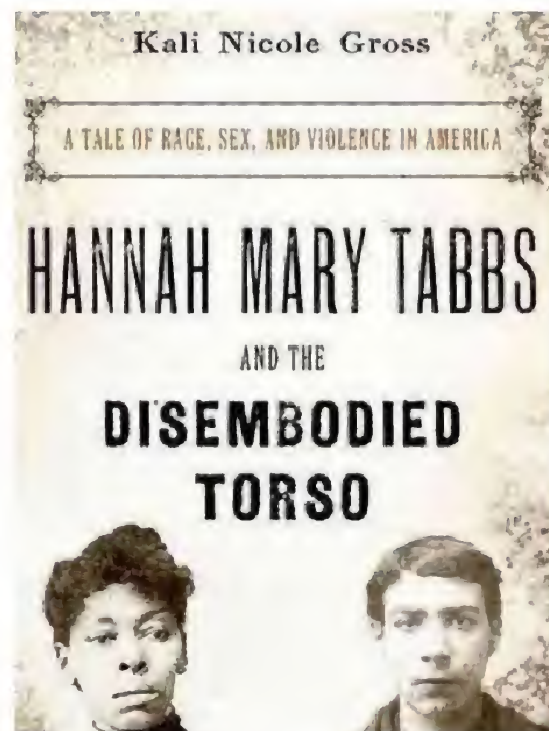


The coroner brought in women of colour in an attempt to discern the victim's race - photo by The National Police Gazette

Despite the numerous assaults she committed in the black community, she had no criminal record - it wasn't until authorities believed that her victim was a white man that she found herself in the crosshairs of the justice system. The dynamics spotlight the chasm between the black community and adequate police protection.

Both Tabbs and the young man she implicated in the murder endured coercion and a lengthy interrogation in police custody - this shows the long history of black suspects being beaten into false confessions.

It's a story that proves how systemic racism was woven in the fabric of policing and the adjudication of crime throughout the history of this country. Facing this history means asking different questions about how best to stop profiling and brutality today.



Without question, Hannah Mary Tabbs is a disturbing figure. She did unconscionable things to grant herself pleasure and autonomy at a time when the prevailing message was that black women deserved anything but.

She muddies rigid notions of good and evil, and crime and justice.

I wrote a book about her for all of those reasons and this: I don't want black women to have to be clean in order to merit scholarly attention or to be legible as human beings. Studying figures that aren't customarily "good" serves as an affirmation of their - and ultimately our – humanity.

Kali Nicole Gross is the author of *Hannah Mary Tabbs and the Disembodied Torso*. She is a professor of African and African Diaspora Studies at the University of Texas.

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Top-10 Haunted Pubs in Britain just in time for Halloween | Tellyspotting

kera.org

Top-10 Haunted Pubs in Britain just in time for Halloween

On: October 28, 2013, By: Bill Young, In: Locations, 0 Comments

As we barrel head long towards Halloween, there will be a seemingly endless barrage of haunted houses and horror movie premieres at everyone's disposal in the coming days. Let's not forget the traditional 'lady of the lake' story that seems to fluctuate from urban myth to "*..no, it really happened to my brother, I promise*".

Far more important from our perspective and in keeping with the focus of Tellyspotting, will be to turn our attention to the **Top-10 Haunted Pubs in Britain** this Halloween. While there are a number of top-10 lists floating around of Britain's most haunted, one thing remains a constant as to why pubs are the way to go. As **Spooky Stuff** explains, "*...all-night vigils in haunted buildings are all very well. But wouldn't it be great if you didn't have to wait cold and bored while hoping to see a ghost? Wouldn't it be nice if you could have a bite to eat socialise with friends, maybe even quaff some cold beer while waiting for the spooks to appear?*" Couldn't agree more. Here are their top-10 to check out this year if in the neighborhood...

Grenadier Pub, London – once the favourite haunt of soldiers from the Duke of Wellington's regiment, one unfortunate grenadier seems to still be hanging around. As the story goes, he was playing cards with his fellows guards and was caught cheating. Outraged, they beat him up and threw him down the pub stairwell. The poor chap died and is said to haunt the pub to this day. Numerous lists consider The Grenadier the most-haunted pub in London.

Golden Fleece, York – this pub is said to house both a ghostly pickpocket and a phantom curmudgeon who sometimes gets upset whenever a customer sits in what used to be his favourite seat in addition to a ghostly dog that tugs at punters' trouser legs.

Red Lion, Avebury – amidst the stone circles, UFO reports and some fairly regular paranormal activity, be on the lookout for the ghost of a woman called Florrie who was murdered by her soldier husband in the 17th century after he discovered that she had been unfaithful to him while he was away at war.

The Kings Arms, Monkton Farleigh – filled with an array of ghostly patrons, head on over to the Kings Arms to maybe catch a glimpse of a monk who reportedly died in the pub in mysterious circumstances or a woman whose runaway carriage crashed into the building, killing her. There is also a mysterious key which was unearthed during recent building work on the site. Allegedly two ghosts appeared and warned the bar staff not to knock down the wall behind which the key was eventually found. The purpose of the key is still not known but it now hangs proudly on the pub wall.

St. Anne's Castle, Essex – home to numerous 'ghost hunter' vigils, St. Anne's Castle is the

oldest public house in England and home to a woman who was burned to death as a witch in the early 17th century.



The Skirrid Inn

The Skirrid Inn, Wales – used as a place of execution in the medieval period, The Skirrid Inn has the dubious distinction of having been pronounced the most haunted pub in Britain by famed ghost hunter Richard Jones.

Devil's Stone Inn, Devon – gets its name from the mysterious giant boulder which sits at the centre of the town. No one knows where it came from and legend has it that it was dropped by the Devil himself as he was flying overhead. Not really a reason to classify this as a top haunted pub but is, supposedly, haunted by quite a few ghosts. Most of these seem to have a fairly pleasant disposition save for the single curmudgeon who was believed to be a rent collector in life.

Seven Stars Pub, Sussex – with a history dating back to the Middle Ages, there are regular occurrences of phantom footsteps, shadowy apparitions, and dogs reacting to the presence of something unseen.

Marsden Grotto, South Shields – this private residence was soon transformed into an inn which became a favorite with the local smugglers. The spirit of one unfortunate is believed to be that of a smuggler who informed on his fellows and was brutalised by them after being caught. Psychics have claimed to detect a high level of paranormal activity in the building on numerous occasions.

If you're looking for some closer to home options in Central London, there's always The Morpeth Arms, The Old Bull & Bush, The Black Cap, The Blind Beggar and The Old Queen's Head. How can you not include the The Bucket of Blood in Cornwall, Ye Old Cheshire Cheese which is just off Fleet Street or The Lamb and Flag in Covent Garden?

Happy Haunting. Let us know if you are aware of any others or have experienced anything first hand....

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Haunted Toys 'R' Us

snopes.com

updated From the archive

Legend: The ghost of a disappointed lover haunts the Toys 'R' Us store in Sunnyvale, California.

Origins: If you like a good ghost story, this tale is for you:
Enter the Play-Doh aisle at your own risk. Browse the children's books with caution. And don't even ask to go upstairs, where the toys are stacked.

The Toys 'R' Us in Sunnyvale is haunted by a man named Johnson, employees and psychics say.

"I don't believe in ghosts," said Putt-Putt O'Brien, who has spent 18 years stacking toys at the store. "But you feel a breeze behind you. Someone calls your name and there's nobody there. Funny things happen here that you can't explain."

Rag dolls and toy trucks leap off shelves. Balls bounce down the aisles. Children's books fall out of racks. Baby swings move on their own. The folks at Toys 'R' Us say they've tried to explain it logically but can't.

"Many people have experiences, not just one or two of us," O'Brien said. "He's like Casper. Nothing he does ever hurt anybody."

Others have taken notice, too. Newspapers have written about him.

The toy store has been featured on television's *That's Incredible* and other shows. A Hollywood script writer for the movie *Toys* spent two nights inside doing research. Psychic Sylvia Browne held a seance there in 1978 and has been back a dozen times.

Browne said Johnson told her he was a preacher and ranch hand in the 1880s on the Murphy family farm, where the toy store sits today. He spoke with a mild Swedish accent, and his first name was John, Yon, or Johan. Ten of sixteen people assembled there for the seance said they heard a "high buzzing noise" when Browne was supposedly listening to the ghost.

Browne said the ghost told her he had been in love with Murphy's daughter Elizabeth, who ran off with an East Coast lawyer. Old news clippings say Johnson accidentally hacked his leg with an ax while carelessly chopping down trees. Another story said Johnson was found dead in the orchard with an ax wound in his neck. Both stories say he bled to death.

O'Brien said she saw Johnson once: A young man in his 20s or 30s, wearing knickers, a white long-sleeved work shirt, and a gray tweed snap-brim cap, walked past her. Another time she heard the sound of galloping horses.

"Yohan used to exercise the horses, they say," O'Brien said.

Now he apparently gets his exercise playing with the staff. There was the time when men were waxing the floor, for instance, and a teddy bear kept appearing in each aisle as they moved their equipment through the store. There's the overwhelming sweet smell of garden flowers that haunts Aisle 15C, next to the Mickey Mouse dolls and the Batman toothbrush sets.

So, now the obvious question: Is it all just a desperate sales gimmick?

"It's very good publicity for us," said store director Stephanie Lewis. "But I personally don't believe in it." But even if Lewis doesn't believe it, others do. "Last week we had to chase three or four teenagers away," she said.

"They were sitting out front at 4 a.m. with a Ouija board, trying to conjure up the ghost. Once a week someone comes in here asking about it. Teenagers beg us to let them spend the night on the floor."

"I have employees who will not go into the women's bathroom alone," Lewis said. That's because Johnson follows them in there and turns on the water faucets, she said.

Longtime employees say Johnson has also pulled pranks on contractors who come to do short-term jobs. They see a toy leap from a shelf and refuse to come back.

O'Brien believes Johnson lives upstairs in a breezy, cool corner.

The pranks he pulls upstairs are also harmless, she said, but it's spookier because one is usually alone. "When I go up there, I'll say, 'Johan, I'm only here to work,'" O'Brien said.

So if the place is haunted, why stick around?

"It's a good ghost," said Lisa, another employee, who didn't give her last name. "It's fun here." Barbara "spirited" Mikkelson

Last updated: 16 January 2007

Sources:

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Koeppel, Dan. "Ghost Sightings Aren't Spooking Sales at Toys 'R' Us."
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Even 500 Years After His Death, Hieronymus Bosch Hasn't Lost His Appeal

smithsonianmag.com

http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/even-500-years-after-his-death-hieronymus-bosch-hasnt-lost-his-appeal-180958297/?utm_source=facebook.com&no-ist

Even 500 Years After His Death, Hieronymus Bosch Hasn't Lost His Appeal

A trip to the painter's hometown reminds us how his paintings remain frightfully timely

The Garden of Earthly Delights

By Menachem Wecker

smithsonian.com

March 7, 2016

The Dutch city Hertogenbosch, colloquially referred to as "Den Bosch," remains remarkably similar today to its layout during the medieval age. Similar enough, says mayor Tom Rombouts, that the city's celebrated native son, painter Hieronymus Bosch, if somehow revived, could still find his way blindfolded through the streets.

This year, timed to coincide with the 500th anniversary of Bosch's death, Den Bosch is hosting the largest-ever retrospective of the renowned and fanciful eschatological painter who borrowed from his hometown's name to create a new one for himself. The exhibition, "Hieronymus Bosch: Visions of Genius," held at Den Bosch's Het Noordbrabants Museum gathers 19 of 24 known paintings and some 20 drawings by the master (c. 1450-1516). Several dozen works by Bosch's workshop, followers, and other of his contemporaries provide further context in the exhibit.

What makes this exhibit even more extraordinary is that none of Bosch's works reside permanently in Den Bosch. In the run-up to the exhibit, the Bosch Research and Conservation Project engaged in a multi-year, careful study of as much of the Bosch repertoire as it could get its hands on. In news that made headlines in the art world, the researchers revealed that "The Temptation of St. Anthony," a painting in the collection of Kansas City's Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art -- believed not to be an actual Bosch -- was painted by Bosch himself and that several works at the Museo del Prado in Spain were actually painted by his workshop (his students.)

Bosch's art is known for its fantastical demons and hybrids and he's often discussed anachronistically in Surrealist terms, even though he died nearly 400 years before Salvador Dalí was born. In his "Haywain Triptych" (1510-16), a fish-headed creature with human feet clad in pointed black boots swallows another figure with a snake twisted around her leg. Elsewhere, in "The Last Judgement" (c. 1530-40) by a Bosch follower, a figure with a human head, four feet and peacock feathers narrowly avoids the spear of a bird-headed, fish-tailed demon dressed in armor and wearing a sword.

The Haywain Triptych



The Haywain Triptych



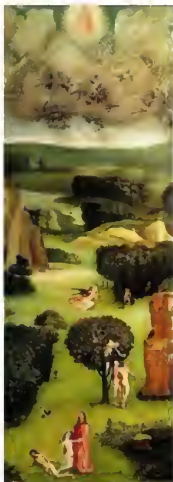
Bosch's is a world in which figures are likely to wear boats as clothing or to emerge from snail's shells; one of greatest dangers is getting eaten alive by demons; and eerily, owls proliferate. Most bizarre, perhaps, is a drawing by Bosch and workshop titled "Singers in an egg and two sketches of monsters," in which a musical troupe (one member has an owl perched

on his head) practices its craft from inside an egg.

Beyond the exhibit itself, the city is obsessed with Bosch. Cropped figures from Bosch's works appear throughout Den Bosch, plastered to storefront windows, and toys shaped like Bosch's demons are available for sale in museum gift shops. Other events include a boat tour of the city's canals (with Bosch-styled sculptures punctuating the canal edges and hellfire projections under bridges), a nighttime light show projected on buildings in city center (which was inspired by a family trip the mayor took to Nancy, France), and much more.

"This city is the world of Bosch. Here, he must have gotten all of his inspiration through what happened in the city and what he saw in the churches and in the monasteries," Rombouts says in an interview with Smithsonian.com. "This was little Rome in those days."

When one projects back 500 years, though, it's hard to dig up more specific connections between Bosch and his city due the lack of a surviving paper trail.



The Last Judgment is thought to be created by a Bosch follower.



Late last year, researchers at the Rijksmuseum were able to identify the exact location of the street scene in Johannes Vermeer's "The Little Street", thanks to 17th-century tax records. But there is no such archive for Bosch, who kept few records that survive today. There is no indication that he ever left the city of Den Bosch, and yet no depictions of Den Bosch, from which he drew his name,

seem to surface in any of his paintings or drawings.

The town does know, however, in which houses the artist, who was born either Joen or Jeroen van Aken into a family of painters, lived and worked and where his studio stood. The latter is a shoe store, and the former a shop whose proprietors had long refused to sell but, nearing retirement age, they have slated the house for sale to the city to turn into a museum, the mayor says.

Asked if Den Bosch will be able to purchase any works by Bosch, Rombouts says the city had hoped to do so, but price tags are prohibitive. "If we would have been more clever, we could have said to [the Kansas City museum], 'May we have it on loan for eternity?' And then said that it is a Bosch," he says. "But we would have to be honest."

While those at the Nelson-Atkins were surely elated to learn about the upgrade, curators at other museums who saw works they considered to be authentic Bosch's downgraded were none too happy, said Jos Koldeweij, chairman of the Bosch Research and Conservation Project's scientific committee.

"Sometimes it's very emotional; sometimes it's very academic," he says. "At the end, it should be very academic, because museums are not art dealers. So the value in money isn't what is the most important thing. What's most important is what everything is." Still, some conversations "got touchy," he says.

In addition to the Prado works, the committee declared two double-sided panels depicting the flood and Noah's ark at Rotterdam's Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, as being from the workshop and dated to c.1510 to 1520. The museum, however, identifies both as Bosch and dated to 1515, the year before his death.

"This is a process of consensus, and discussions about the originality of a work will continue until everyone agrees," says Sjarel Ex, the Boijmans' director.

"We think that it is very necessary," Ex says of the investigation, noting the importance in particular of Bosch's drawings. "What do we know about the time over 500 years ago?" he adds. Just 700 drawings remain in all of Western culture which were created before the year 1500. "That's how rare it is," he says.

The star of Bosch's repertoire, the Prado's "The Garden of Earthly Delights," is not part of the exhibit, although that's unsurprising. "It's huge and too fragile," Koldeweij says. "Nobody reckoned it would come. It's impossible. There are a number of artworks that never travel. So [Rembrandt's] 'Night Watch' doesn't go to Japan, and the 'Garden' doesn't come here."

"Death and the Miser" from Washington's National Gallery of Art (c. 1485-90 in the gallery's estimation, and c. 1500-10 in the exhibit's tally) appears early in the exhibit and reflects powerfully the religious view that would have been ubiquitous in 16th-century Den Bosch..

In what is perhaps a double portrait, a man – the titular "miser," a label associated with greed and selfishness—lies on his deathbed, as a skeleton opens the door and points an arrow at the man. An angel at the man's side guides his gaze upward toward a crucifixion hanging in the window, as demons do their mischief. One looks down from atop the bed's canopy;



Death and the Miser (Click the link in the credit for a larger version.)

another hands the man a bag of coins (designed to tempt him with earthly possessions and to distract him from salvation); and yet others engage perhaps another depiction of the miser (carrying rosary beads in his hand) in the foreground as he hoards coins in a chest.

That choice between heaven and hell, eternal life and perpetual damnation, and

greed and lust on the one hand and purity on the other -- which surfaces so often in Bosch's work -- takes on an even more fascinating role in this particular work. Analysis of the underdrawing reveals that Bosch originally placed the bag of coins in the bedridden man's grasp, while the final painting has the demon tempting the man with the money. The miser, in the final work, has yet to make his choice.

"Responsibility for the decision lies with the man himself; it is he, after all, who will have to bear the consequences: will it be heaven or hell?" states the exhibition catalog.

The same lady-or-the-tiger scenario surfaces in the "Wayfarer Triptych" (c. 1500-10) on loan from the Boijmans. A journeyer, likely an Everyman, looks over his shoulder as he walks away from a brothel. Underwear hangs in a window of the decrepit house; a man pees in a corner; and a couple canoodles in the doorway. As if matters weren't sufficiently dour, a pigs drink at a trough -- no doubt a reference to the Prodigal Son -- in front of the house.



The Wayfarer (or The Pedlar) (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen via Wikicommons)

The man has left the house behind, but his longing gaze, as well as the closed gate and cow obstructing his path forward, question the degree to which he's prepared to actually carry on along the straight and narrow path, rather than regressing. And his tattered clothes, apparent leg injury, and several other bizarre accessories on his person further cloud matters.

Turning on the television or watching any number of movies today, one is liable to come across special effect-heavy depictions of nightmarish sequences that evoke Bosch's demons and hell-scapes. In this regard,

Bosch was doubtless ahead of his time.

But his works are also incredibly timeless, particularly his depictions of people struggling with

basic life decisions: to do good, or to do evil. The costumes and the religious sensibilities and a million other aspects are decidedly medieval, but at their core, the decisions and the question of what defines humanity are very modern indeed.



Tags

Menachem Wecker covers art, religion, and education for *Washington Post*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Deseret News*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *Jewish Daily Forward*, and others. A former education reporter at *U.S. News & World Report*, he is co-author of the recent book *Consider No Evil: Two Faith Traditions and the Problem of Academic Freedom in Religious Higher Education*. He holds a master's in art history from George Washington University.

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Highgate Vampire: Can you help resolve 46-year-old supernatural mystery?

Wednesday 17 February 2016

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Victims of the 'Highgate Vampire' are being sought to finally resolve the 46-year-old

supernatural mystery.

During a spate of incidents between 1969 and 1973 two women were reportedly attacked in North London by a mysterious grey figure.

The Highgate Vampire publication and Vamped magazine are seeking the whereabouts of alleged survivors Elizabeth Wojdyla and Jaqueline Cooper.



Highgate Vampire: Can you help resolve 46-year-old supernatural mystery?

Editors of the online magazines are convinced their testimony could expose the figure who haunted the Highgate Cemetery.

The Highgate Vampire editor, Trystan Lewis Swale, is using an account from self-styled vampire hunter Sean Manchester to unravel the case. He said: "Miss Wojdyla met Manchester by chance in the summer of 1969 whilst she was suffering from a number of health complaints.

"He attributed her condition to repeated attacks from what he would call a 'King Wampyr'; supposedly an undead medieval nobleman from central Europe." Miss Wojdyla has never gone public leaving the vampire hunter's recollections unconfirmed.

Finding Jaqueline Cooper is Vamped's Anthony Hogg's chief concern but with contrasting names attributed to her it is proving problematic.

She featured in a 1973 Witchcraft magazine article as 'Jacqui Frances' and photos from Manchester's accounts have called her 'Lusia'.

Mr Hogg added: "I'm confident this person's true identity is Jacqueline Cooper.

"A number of former acquaintances are convinced the woman in the photographs are her, I just really want to confirm this."

Those with information regarding their whereabouts can contact Mr Lewis Swale on severnforteana@gmail.com and Mr Hogg on anthonyhogg@vamped.org

Mr. Manchester, whether or not I was "born then" is as irrelevant as a historian not being born during Oliver Cromwell's era; I have been quoting your own writings. And besides, just because you "lived" something, doesn't necessarily mean you're telling the truth, hence your repeated contradictions and misstatements.

In this case, the fact remains: your own work establishes that Lusia and Jacqueline are the same person, thanks to the breadcrumb trail you've left behind. The association also extends beyond photographs but events you described in your texts.

You are not Elizabeth or Jacqueline's guardians. Your claims about "privacy" don't wash considering you were the first person to put them in the public spotlight — and continue to do so through your blogs, websites, etc. Here's one example: <http://vampirologist.blogspot.com.au/2009/01/haunting-of-elizabeth-wojdyla.html>

It's also highly likely you have a vested interest in making sure they stay "silent" (especially after your spiteful, and quite frankly, disturbing commentary on Mr. Swale and his wife) but as explained before, we will take their word on it over yours. The appeal is for them, not you.

As to Campbell, attacking his character won't override the facts, either: you confirmed Lusia's true identity as Jacqueline Cooper in his article.

 thevampirologist Bishop.Seán.Manchester 12:22pm Fri 19 Feb 16
Ref

In the meantime, I have sought out Mr. Campbell for comment on your posts.

But to say you have "washed" your hands of David Farrant is also another falsehood, considering a sizeable bulk of your writings are about him.

Pcgawnmad Bishop.Seán.Manchester 12:44pm Thu 18 Feb 16

Should go down the police station, report stalking by a vampire hunter, they have probably heard this one before but the old sarge may not have.

thevampirologist Pcgawnmad 1:31pm Thu 18 Feb 16

Well, here's a feast for his senses: <http://www.gothicpress.freemove.co.uk/Vampire%20Research%20Society.htm>

Pcgawnmad 12:55am Sat 20 Feb 16

Every film Peter Cushing was in ended up with his scrawny neck being strangled by the mad professor. The other exciting bit was when the pretty bird unbeknown to everyone had been bitten on the neck during the night by Christopher Lee after he crept in the bedroom with a

semi lob on.

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LakeBreeze 2:37pm Wed 17 Feb 16

The poor woman. If she's never "gone public" these people have certainly outed her now. Perhaps she would rather put this bizarre claim in the past, and now this guy is putting her names or new names out in public regarding something that she might find humiliating now that she's older and wiser and possibly embarrassed. What a shame.

➡ Bishop.Seán.Manchester LakeBreeze 4:05pm Fri 19 Feb 16

Ref

Let's be absolutely clear, these people, ie Anthony Hogg (Australia), Trystan Lewis Swale (UK) and Erin Chapman (Canada), are in the business of stalking and trolling. Hogg has been trolling me for over a decade and Swale for almost half that time. Have they the right to stalk two women old enough to be their mothers who do not wish to be contacted and exploited? No, absolutely not. Having experienced these three trolls first-hand I would opine that they are all compulsive and obsessive types with sociopathic tendencies and a total disregard for anyone and anything other than their own selfish agenda which is the parasitical pursuit of self-publicity. None are self-made or have a life, so they look to others they do not know to exploit and drain.

➡ thevampirologist Bishop.Seán.Manchester 4:12pm Fri 19 Feb 16

Ref

That isn't true. Mr. Manchester has been equating criticism of his claims with "trolling"; not the same thing.

He also keeps forgetting that the call-out isn't for him, but for the women in question. We are not "stalking" them, but seeking their comment on their experiences, which Mr. Manchester has been making public for over 40 years and still continues to profit from. See:

<http://www.gothicpress.freemove.co.uk/Blookshop.htm>

As to the maliciousness and invective of the rest of Mr. Manchester's commentary, I still find these utterances bizarre when spewed forth from the mouth of a supposed bishop.

➡ Bishop.Seán.Manchester thevampirologist 5:03pm Fri 19 Feb 16

Ref

Anthony Hogg must ask himself why he has been suspended so many times on Facebook for abusive trolling, and is currently undergoing a thirty days' suspension. He must also ask himself why his blogs in the past have been disabled for containing unacceptable and hateful material, including profane and obscene language, about me that he has personally uploaded.

I do not profit out of anything, and I do not provide interviews on this or any other topic. The concomitants of being a public figure have long since eroded where I am concerned and I now consider myself a private individual. The two women being stalked by Hogg, Swale and Chapman also regard themselves as private individuals and have done so for far longer than have I. Trolls do not respect other people's privacy and do all they can to invade it. That is the

acid test of how a troll is defined when you cut away all the ugly provocations and malicious spam.

Others will decide for themselves whether Hogg is a troll. I already know, having been trolled by this individual for over ten years.

Last edited: 5:05pm Fri 19 Feb 16

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Others will decide for themselves whether Hogg is a troll. I already know, having been trolled by this individual for over ten years.

 thevampiologist Bishop.Seán.Manchester 7:54pm Fri 19 Feb 16
Re:

The reason I have been suspended is because of malicious reporting. In one instance, you even reported me for posting a link to your blog, "Hoggwatch," when I used it as an example of ways I'm harassed online. See: <http://dawwih.blogspot.com.au/2013/11/suspended-from-posting-to-facebook-for.htm>

My blogs have not been "disabled for containing unacceptable and hateful material, including profane and obscene language, about me that he has personally uploaded." They were disabled after you issued DMCA takedown notices against them in order to suppress critical content. One example: <http://vamped.org/2014/11/27/vampire-hunter-hammers-stake-the-rough-article/>

You do not profit out of anything? You have repeatedly referred to your books as "best selling": <http://www.gothicpress.freemove.co.uk/H>

ighgate%20Vampire%20
Book.htm

You have provided numerous interviews on the topic. Here's one: http://andrewgough.co.uk/interviews_manc_hester/

You may consider yourself a private individual, but you have certainly not retired from the public eye — as your commentary here shows. And you're still selling your books and merchandise.

We are not stalking the women in question. We are making a public appeal. You did the same thing in 1991. We are not "trolls". Our request is sincere. Your claims about "privacy" stem only from you; not the women in question.

As explained multiple times, we will take their request over yours, because you're biased and may have a vested interest in their silence. You are not their official representative, minder or legal guardian. The appeal is for them, not you.

I have certainly criticised your claims (as I've done here through citing sources including in this very comment), but such criticism is not mere "trolling" unless you consider investigative journalism to be trolling, which, I think, is an unfair characterisation.

One could certainly consider your malicious commentary trolling, though, on account of your repeated attacks on our character.

Score:

Trystan1975 3:29pm Wed 17 Feb 16

LakeBreeze, both names have been in the public domain since 1985 (ten years earlier for one) in a range of publications. It wasn't too long ago that one of them was mentioned on a documentary presented by Anthony Head from Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Miss Wojdyla has seemingly gone on the record, albeit through Manchester as the middleman. He has quite a reputation for stretching the truth! Hence why the Vamped guys and myself are keen to hear what the alleged victims have to say today!

Last edited: 1:14am Thu 18 Feb 16

Pcgawnmad Trystan19754:05pm Wed 17 Feb 16

Keep taking the tablets, we are all here to help you, you do not have to think here, it is all laid on, lie down on the couch, the lights will be turned off, slowly count to ten.

Brisbane 6:11pm Wed 17 Feb 16

"alleged survivors Elizabeth Wojdyla and Jaqueline Cooper".

Er, they did survive, there's nothing alleged about it. Do you mean "alleged victims"?

thevampirologist Brisbane1:26am Thu 18 Feb 16

We would certainly hope so!

thevampirologist 1:25am Thu 18 Feb 16

Ms. (Mr.?) Breeze,

We appreciate your concern and you're right to air it. However, as Trystan clarified, we are talking about a public domain case. How else do you think we know about it in the first place?

They have not been "outed" by us; unless you're lumping us in with countless authors who have covered their experiences via Mr. Manchester's writings on the case (he has also published their photos in books and online). If so, I think it reasonable to assume that Ms. Wojdyla and Cooper were (and are) aware of their photographs being taken and used in publication, considering the case has been in public domain for over 30 years.

Rest assured, our efforts are sincere. If either witness got in touch with us, expressing their desire for privacy, we will certainly respect it. But, in the mean time, just be mindful that this is a public appeal because it's a public domain case. We haven't revealed anything countless other authors haven't done before us.

But we would prefer not to rely on assumptions and actually hear from the ladies in question. It's up to them and we leave any communications at their discretion.

I hope this clears up your concerns.

Kind regards,

Anthony Hogg

[deleted]11:19am Thu 18 Feb 16

[deleted]11:45am Thu 18 Feb 16

👉 thevampirologist [deleted] 12:00pm Thu 18 Feb 16

Re:

Mr. Manchester, it appears you have simply copy-pasted your comment from the blog post linked to at the bottom of your reply. Are you its author?

Second, we should also make something else abundantly clear: we're more interested in hearing from the women themselves, firsthand sources, not your speculation on whether or not they'd like to be contacted. After all, you may have a vested interest in them *not* speaking to us.

You are not their representative, after all, nor their guardian. Indeed, we wouldn't even know about these women at all if you hadn't covered them in your public accounts (including

photos) through books, TV, and magazines. It seems odd that only when we issue a public appeal for them to speak on their own behalves, that it becomes a problem for you.

I have also noticed you have countered this search with one of your own: targeting Mr. Swale's wife, who has no bearing on the case at all. Quote:

"Truth seekers are asking for the public's help in finding Joanna Swale whose last visible entry on Facebook is dated 21 June 2014. Around that time her husband, Trystan Lewis Swale, accelerated his obsession with a vampire case that occurred before he was born in an area many miles from his native Cheltenham in Gloucestershire. Trystan and Joanna Swale have children together, but Trystan Lewis Swale appears to be estranged from his wife, albeit not his children, who clearly does not share his sociopathic tendencies to stalk and troll individuals."

And:

"Let's now see if Swale likes the boot on the other foot with our 'appeal' to find and talk to Joanna Swale who, to quote her husband, possesses the right to do as she pleases. She may choose to speak to enquirers about her very dysfunctional husband."

Source: https://www.facebook.com/groups/The.Original.Vampirologist/permalink/524153364431688/?__mref=message_bubble

That seems an oddly ominous, personal and threatening gesture (not to mention decidedly unChristian behaviour for a supposed bishop); almost as if you are threatened by our search for firsthand testimony. Some people might take that as you being worried about what Elizabeth and Jacqueline might say about your version of events.

[deleted]11:54am Thu 18 Feb 16

Bishop.Seán.Manchester 11:55am Thu 18 Feb 16

I should make abundantly clear that neither women welcome the intrusion into their private lives of the kind Trystan Lewis Swale and his collaborators wish to foist upon them. One of the women is completely misidentified and is not the person attributed by Swale and his fellow travellers to the Highgate case. He even misquotes the name from a 1970s magazine and replaces what was actually printed at the time with her real name, acquired, of course, from the convicted felon David Farrant. When I last had contact with Jacqueline many decades ago she left me in absolutely no doubt about how she felt on the matter should members of the public or the press want to talk to her.

The other female, Elizabeth, who was involved in the Highgate case at its inception, I spoke to very recently. She once again reiterated that claims made by David Farrant that she was

contacted at work by an emissary of his decades ago is arrant nonsense and utterly false. Moreover, she was utterly horrified at the prospect of being contacted by strangers obsessed with the happenings in the 1960s, which she brought to my attention at the time and I wrote about, and made it exceedingly clear that she would take every measure to prevent it.

If a complaint should be made to the police it will, of course, come from her and not myself; though I will naturally do everything to assist either woman with their endeavour and right to enjoy a private life without this latter-day stalking.

Sincerely,

† Seán Manchester

http://fobsm.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/a-low-and-hollow-place_9.html

 thevampirologist Bishop.Seán.Manchester 12:14pm Thu 18 Feb 16
Re:

No one was "completely misidentified": Elizabeth Wojdyla is Elizabeth Wojdyla and Jacqueline Cooper was, indeed, Lusia.

You said Mr. Swale "misquotes the name from a 1970s magazine," but he hasn't. Allow me to correct your mistake.

Mr. Swale cited her name as "Jacqui Frances" because that's how you referred to her, in your article, "The World of the Vampire" (Witchcraft, vol. 2, no. 8, 1973).

On page 53, you reproduced an image of her, captioned "Jacqui Frances came face to face with the Highgate Vampire". The photograph is identical to the woman you identify as "Lusia" in your book, "The Highgate Vampire" (British Occult Society, 1985), p. 32: "Lusia, beautiful and innocent as a child, who fell prey to the undead".

Further evidence of Swale's correct use of name is in the text of the Witchcraft article, where you said: "Jacqui Frances, a pretty 22-year-old blonde, recalls the night she came face to face with the Highgate Vampire." (p. 53)

It has been 43 years since you wrote those words, so your forgetfulness is understandable; though not excusable if you accuse Mr. Swale of a mistake which you could have easily double-checked yourself.

No one was "completely misidentified": Elizabeth Wojdyla is Elizabeth Wojdyla and Jacqueline Cooper was, indeed, Lusia. You said Mr. Swale "misquotes the name from a 1970s magazine," but he hasn't. Allow me to correct your mistake. Mr. Swale cited her name

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 Bishop.Seán.Manchester thevampiologist 3:07pm Thu 18 Feb 16
Re:

Jacqueline was the 1960s' photographic model who sometimes accompanied me to various events, helping me with equipment, as well as appearing in pictures herself. Unsurprisingly, she occasionally found herself entangled in incidents I was investigating or participating in. It has been falsely claimed by the man convicted of black magic crimes at Highgate Cemetery in the 1970s (for which he was sentenced to a prison term of four years and eight months) that Jacqueline and "Lusia" are one and the same. That is certainly not the case. Unfortunately, this malicious falsehood identifying an innocent third party has been exploited by one or two internet trolls who are obviously not troubled that their sole source is a man with a criminal record who has waged a hate campaign against the author of The Highgate Vampire, namely myself, from the moment he became aware of me in February 1970.



Bishop.Seán.Manchester Bishop.Seán.Manchester 11:44am Fri 19 Feb 16

Re:

Those pursuing "Lusia" were not born when these events took place and one particular character, Anthony Hogg, has never visited the United Kingdom, much less Highgate Cemetery. Sadly, there are some people on the internet who are facilitating the wanton stalking of two females, Jacqueline and Elizabeth, who wish to be left in peace. What happened almost half a century ago should not be used as an excuse to pursue them relentlessly now. I am the author of The Highgate Vampire but I, too, all these years later, have a right to a private life, as does anyone mentioned in my account. Those seeking to gain their fifteen minutes of fame on the coat-tails of my book and incidents that occurred almost half a century ago should not be aided and abetted by anyone, least of all the press.

As the author of The Highgate Vampire I should know who and what is what. Jacqueline was a model who, like a number of actresses who came after her, represented "Lusia" in pictures. She was not "Lusia."

The identity of "Lusia" has always been shielded by me, and always shall be. Hence members of her family cannot be traced and her grave remains hidden from the public and such compulsive individuals who potentially might disturb its tranquility for their own nefarious reasons. I allowed just enough confusion to arise much closer to the time to protect her true identity. Jacqueline and "Lusia" are completely separate people.

Elizabeth was indeed involved in the Highgate Vampire case at its inception. Her testimony can be heard in a video (link below). I spoke to her very recently. She once again reiterated that claims made by David Farrant that she was contacted at work by an emissary of his decades ago is absolute nonsense and utterly false. She was mortified at the prospect of being sought by strangers obsessed with the happenings in the 1960s, and made it clear that she would take measures to prevent it.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xexqm3ltmrU>

Duncan Campbell insinuated himself into the situation in the 1970s and proved himself, in my experience, to be biased and led by a desire to curry favour with David Farrant. His initial interest in Farrant was the fact that the latter is an ex-convict. Campbell was writing a book about the criminal underworld and took an unhealthy interest in certain individuals within that hemisphere. He used Farrant for some cheap and tawdry sensationalism in magazines and newspapers, but once I realised that Campbell was in Farrant's pocket I washed my hands of the journalist.

Last edited: 1:00pm Fri 19 Feb 16



thevampiologist Bishop.Seán.Manchester 12:13pm Fri 19 Feb 16

Re:

Last edited: 12:25pm Fri 19 Feb 16

Hillary Clinton Would Declassify UFO Files, Top Aide Says huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS **John Podesta: I've Convinced Hillary Clinton To Declassify UFO Files**

"I think the American people can handle the truth about this," Clinton's campaign manager said.

03/03/2016 11:20 am ET

- Lee Spiegel Writer, Editor

John Podesta, campaign manager for Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and a longtime advocate for government disclosure of UFO files, said Clinton is ready to look into the issue.

"I've talked to Hillary about that," Podesta told KLAS-TV Politics NOW co-host Steve Sebelius during a campaign stop in Las Vegas. "There are still classified files that could be declassified."

He continued: "I think I've convinced her that we need an effort to kind of go look at that and declassify as much as we can, so that people have their legitimate questions answered. More attention and more discussion about unexplained aerial phenomena can happen without people -- who are in public life, who are serious about this -- being ridiculed."



KLAS-TV / Las Vegas NOW

Podesta made it clear that "the UFO question has been discussed" with Clinton, KLAS reporter George Knapp reveals in the above video (which includes statements from this reporter). The station broadcast the interview on Tuesday.

Clinton, the Democratic front-runner, made headlines in January when she told the Conway Daily Sun newspaper in New Hampshire that she would "get to the bottom of" the mystery behind unexplained aerial objects.

UFOs have been hovering around Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton, for decades.

At a 2005 speech in Hong Kong, Bill Clinton told about his efforts to look into the phenomenon:

"I did attempt to find out if there were any secret government documents that

reveal things, and if there were, they were concealed from me, too. I wouldn't be the first president that underlings have lied to or that career bureaucrats have waited out. But there may be some career person sitting around somewhere hiding these dark secrets, even from elected presidents. But, if so, they successfully eluded me, and I'm almost embarrassed to tell you I did try to find out."

Podesta, who was Bill Clinton's White House chief of staff, for years has called on the U.S. government to declassify UFO files. In a 2002 speech at the National Press Club in Washington, he said, "I think it's time to open the books on questions that have remained in the dark on the question of government investigations of UFOs.

"It's time to find out what the truth really is that's out there," Podesta said. "We ought to do it because it's right. We ought to do it because the American people, quite frankly, can handle the truth. And we ought to do it because it's the law."

After spending a year as President Barack Obama's senior adviser, Podesta tweeted on Feb. 13, 2015, that his biggest regret was "not securing the disclosure of the UFO files."

Podesta told KLAS he's been criticized for his position on UFO disclosure.

"I come in for my fair share of people raising questions about whether I'm off my rocker, but I've been a longtime advocate of declassification of records," he said. "People really want to know what the government knows."

Video above is courtesy of KLAS-TV / Las Vegas NOW

2005 -- Former Pres. Bill Clinton (D), speaking in Hong Kong, discussed UFOs, Roswell and Area 51: "The Roswell thing, I think, really was an illusion - I don't think it happened. I did attempt to find out if there were any secret government documents that reveal things, and if there were, they were concealed from me, too. I wouldn't be the first president that underlings have lied to or that career bureaucrats have waited out. But there may be some career person, sitting around somewhere, hiding these dark secrets, even from elected presidents. But, if so, they successfully eluded me, and I'm almost embarrassed to tell you I did try to find out."

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Ronald Reagan

1974 - California Gov. Ronald Reagan (R) was one of four people in a Cessna Citation plane who witnessed an unusual object that was a steady light which elongated and went from a



AP

normal cruising speed to a rapid acceleration. Reagan told the Wall Street Journal, "We followed it for several minutes. It was a bright white light, and all of a sudden to our utter amazement, it went straight up into the heavens."

Ronald Reagan

1987 - Pres. Ronald Reagan (R) told the United Nations General Assembly: "In our obsession with antagonisms of the moment, we often forget how much unites all the members of humanity. Perhaps we need some outside, universal threat to make us recognize this common bond. I occasionally

think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world."

Jimmy Carter

1969 - Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter (D) filed an official report in which he claimed to have seen a UFO - a "self-luminous" object "as bright as the moon." Most skeptics and debunkers have maintained that the future president had only misidentified the planet Venus in Leary, Ga.

John F. Kennedy

1963 - Pres. John F. Kennedy (D) sent a memo to the head of the CIA, seeking documents about UFOs, just 10 days before he was assassinated. In a letter dated Nov. 12, 1963, JFK wanted a review of all UFO intelligence files that might affect national security. On the same day, Kennedy sent a separate memo to NASA, indicating he wanted to cooperate with the then-Soviet Union on outer space activities.

Barry Goldwater

1975 -- Ariz. Sen. Barry Goldwater (R) revealed he had previously attempted to find out what was in the building at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, where UFO information was allegedly stored. His request was denied because it was classified above Top Secret. In a 1988 interview with Larry King, Goldwater said he believed secret government UFO investigations were going on.

Fife Symington

1997 -- Ariz. Gov. Fife Symington (R) was one of thousands of eyewitnesses to the historic Phoenix Lights, a mass UFO sighting, which he didn't admit was real until 10 years later, and which he felt was an extraterrestrial vehicle.

Bill Richardson

2004 -- New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson (D), and 2008 presidential candidate, calls on the U.S. government to declassify all Roswell UFO documents. Richardson wrote: "The mystery surrounding this crash has never been adequately explained. Clearly, it would help everyone if the U.S. government disclosed everything it knows. The American people can handle the truth -- no matter how bizarre or mundane."

John Podesta

2007 - Former Clinton White House Chief of Staff John Podesta (D) tells a National Press

Club press conference about the need for UFO disclosure: "I think it's time to open the books on questions that have remained in the dark and the question of government investigations of UFOs. It's time to find out what the truth really is that's out there. We ought to do it because the American people, quite frankly, can handle the truth."

Dwight Eisenhower

2010 -- NH State Representative Henry W. McElroy (R) records a video on which he claims to have seen a briefing document from the 1950s that described how benevolent aliens were present in the U.S. and that a meeting could be arranged between them and former Pres. Eisenhower.

Gerald Ford

1966 -- Michigan Rep. Gerald Ford (R), before becoming president, called for an official government hearing on the subject of UFOs after his home state experienced a wave of sightings. This was the incident which resulted in the famous use of the phrase "swamp gas" as a possible explanation for UFOs. Ford wrote a letter to the House Armed Services committee that read, in part: "In the firm belief that the American public deserves a better explanation than that thus far given by the Air Force, I strongly recommend that there be a committee investigation of the UFO phenomena. I think we owe it to the people to establish credibility regarding UFOs and to produce the greatest possible enlightenment on this subject."

Richard M. Nixon

1974 -- Pres. Richard Nixon (R) became part of UFO folklore when he allegedly took comedian Jackie Gleason to Homestead Air Force Base in Florida in 1974 and showed him wreckage of a flying saucer as well as the remains of several extraterrestrials. The story was made public by two people: Gleason's wife, Beverly, told Esquire Magazine that her husband had related this tale to her. And Gleason, who was known to have a strong interest in UFOs, reportedly told the story to author Larry Warren, who had been involved in real UFO encounters experienced by many American military personnel at the RAF Bentwaters base in the U.K. in 1980.

Dennis Kucinich

2007 -- Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D) entered the UFO culture during one of the 2007 Democratic presidential debates, by admitting he had seen a UFO. "It was an unidentified flying object, OK? It's like, it's unidentified. I saw something. More people in this country have seen UFOs than I think approve of George Bush's presidency," he said.

Richard B. Russell

1955 -- Georgia Sen. Richard B. Russell Jr. (D), chairman of the Armed Services Committee, was on a trip to Russia, traveling on a train when he and others in his party saw a disc-shaped craft take off near the train tracks. The reports filled out to the U.S. Air Force by Russell and his aides were classified as Top Secret and remained that way until they were eventually released via the Freedom of Information Act.

Harrison Schmitt

1982 -- New Mexico Sen. Harrison Schmitt (R), the Apollo 17 astronaut who was the last man to walk on the moon, was also interested in UFOs. He's quoted saying, "If the government has any information on UFOs, it should be released to the public -- barring anything that might affect national security. We ought to be involved in a search to find out if there's any good evidence that UFOs really are spacecraft that are being piloted by extraterrestrial

beings."

Edward Roush

1968 -- Indiana Rep. J. Edward Roush (D), a member of the Science and Astronautics Committee, was the chairman of a UFO symposium in 1968, which included six scientists invited to discuss the various aspects of UFOs. In 1975, Roush told HuffPost's Lee Spiegel, "The people want to know what a UFO is, and therefore, any chance that we have to learn, we should take advantage of it. When you tell an American, 'I can't explain it,' he wants to know, 'Why can't you explain it? Why doesn't someone explain it?' And I think that kind of pressure is going to change the view of many government officials and members of Congress in the future."

John Gilligan

1973 -- Ohio Gov. John Gilligan [D] reported that while he and his wife were driving near Ann Arbor, Mich., in October 1973, they saw what might have been a UFO. Gilligan described the object as vertical-shaped and amber-colored.

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History of Ghost Taxis of Japan

hyakumonogatari.com

18Feb20163 Comments

by Zack Davisson

*Yurei_Taxi_Shigeru_Mizuki*

Translated and Sourced from Shigeru Mizuki's Mujara, Japanese Ghost Stories: Spirits, Hauntings, and Paranormal Phenomena, and Other Sources

The yūrei of Japan have been riding taxis

again. While they tend to eschew trains and busses, since taxis appeared around the late Taisho period yūrei have been hailing cabs for quick rides around town.

In Japan Ghost Passengers, taxi drivers have been reporting ghostly passengers who climb on board, ask to be taken to a destination, then mysteriously vanish before paying their toll. The recent spate of ghostly passengers have been attributed to the 2011 Fukushima disaster, as the dead struggle to find their way home—or may not even know they are dead.

This is no new phenomenon. One of the first things I ever wrote on yūrei was Tales of Ghostly Japan for Japanzine back in (I think) 2005:

True Tales of Tokyo Terror Taxis

The cabdriver knew that the ghosts of Japan were not confined to ancient graveyards and shadow-haunted shrines. Any modern resident of the nation's capital could tell you that the taxis of Tokyo are more haunted than hearses, and his own route took him regularly through open gates to the spirit world. There was Sendagaya tunnel, which winds beneath the cemetery of Senjuiin Temple, or Shirogane tunnel, where legend has it that screaming faces are silhouetted against the tunnel's pillars and through which the Shinigami – the spirit of Death itself – is said to pass. All of his fellow cabbies could wax a yarn of passengers who got on then disappeared, or of catching a glimpse of a woman or child's face in the rear view mirror. He too had a story to tell.

It was a stormy autumn night, near Aoyama Cemetery, where he picked up a poor young girl drenched by the rain. It was dark, so he didn't get a good look at her face, but she seemed sad and he figured she had been visiting a recently deceased relative or friend. The address

she gave was some distance away, and they drove in silence. A good cabbie doesn't make small talk when picking someone up from a cemetery.

When they arrived at the address, the girl didn't get out, but whispered for him to wait a bit, while she stared out the window at a 2nd floor apartment. Ten minutes or so passed as she watched, never speaking, never crying; simply observing a solitary figure move about the apartment. Suddenly, the girl asked to be taken to a new address, this one back near the cemetery where he had first picked her up. The rain was heavy, and the driver focused on the road, leaving the girl to her thoughts.

When he arrived at the new address, a modern house in a good neighborhood, the cabbie opened the door and turned around to collect his fare. To his surprise, he found himself staring at an empty back seat, with a deep puddle where the girl had been sitting moments before. Mouth open, he just sat there staring at the vacant seat, until a knocking on the window shook him from his reverie.

The father of the house, seeing the taxi outside, had calmly walked out bringing with him the exact charge for the fare. He explained that the young girl had been his daughter, who died in a traffic accident some years ago and was buried in Aoyama Cemetery. From time to time, he said, she hailed a cab and, after visiting her old boyfriend's apartment, asked to be driven home. The father thanked the driver for his troubles, and sent him on his way.

The Vanishing Hitchhiker

Anyone with a knowledge of folklore can easily recognize these tales of disappearing passengers as *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*. It is an ancient legend—the oldest known account dates back to ancient Rome, when Proculus meets a traveler on the road, who disappears after revealing himself as Romulus, one of Rome's legendary founders. The story is known in almost every country with slight variations. In his 1981 book *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*, Jan Harold Brunvand says the legend has “recognizable parallels in Korea, Tsarist Russia, among Chinese-Americans, Mormons, and Ozark mountaineers.”

The story has a basic pattern. A driver picks up a passenger; either a customer for a taxi cab or a hitchhiker. The passenger requests a destination, and the two chat a bit while the driver speeds along. When they arrive at the destination, the driver turns around to find the passenger vanished—always leaving some trace of the phantom passenger to prove they existed. The trace can be a lost glove, or a puddle of water from the rain, or evidence on a taxi meter. There is often some additional confirmation, such as a graveyard with their name, or a father coming out to pay the fare.

They are always told as true stories, not legends—and maybe they are.

Driverless Yūrei Taxi Cabs

In his yokai encyclopedia *Mujara*, folklorist and artist Shigeru Mizuki records a different type of haunted taxi—the driverless vehicles known as 無人車幽霊タクシー—Driverless Yūrei Taxis.

In about 1931, there were rumors of a driverless taxi that drove the streets in the vicinity of the Imperial Palace. At night, taxis would line up for passengers, and they often saw a taxi whizzing dangerously through the streets. Looking inside they could see no one at the wheel. After the car was gone, they would look on the streets but could find no trace of its passing. However, those that saw the car would inevitably meet with an accident within two days. Taxi drivers that worked near the Imperial Palace were terrified of glimpsing the phantom vehicle.

Similar driverless vehicles were reported on the Gotemba interchange between Tokyo and Nagoya, and in the Namba area of Osaka. Most reported the cars as white and travelling at unsafe speeds.

The Phantom Rickshaw

There are older tales from the same area near Gotemba, of a white rickshaw that would travel through town without anyone pulling it. The rickshaw often had a family crest painted on the back, and was attributed either to a murdered member of that family, or to a yūrei from a nearby burial mound. Apparently across the years the spirit has upgraded himself to modern technology.

Who knows what vehicle he may ride in the future?

Translator's Note:

This entry was an answer to the numerous people who sent me the MSN story of modern taxi yūrei currently haunting Japan. It was great to see the ghosts of Japan are still up to their old tricks! And nostalgic remembering my very first yūrei article written more than 10 years ago!

I also wanted to have something new for Folklore Thursday on Twitter! If you are a fan of legends and lore, join in the fun every Thursday!

3 Comments



1. angela1313

Feb 18, 2016 @ 14:15:08

I think Japanese ghosts are some of the world's most adaptable and it certainly helps keep the ghost story alive. Nice to see a new post, thank you. Of course I was able to last the long, dark winter with your book, which is both beautiful as a work of bookmaking and a thrill to read. I keep it wrapped in a furoshiki so it stays pristine.



• Zack Davisson

Feb 18, 2016 @ 14:18:47

Thanks! I was glad I finally had time to do a new post also! And I LOVE that you keep my book in a furoshiki! How cool!!!!

2. Susana

Feb 18, 2016 @ 14:29:45



Very interesting! The story about “vanishing hitchhikers”, as you call it, is very popular everywhere, it seems. In Spain, we have “la chica de la curva” (the girl... at? the curve?), which is basically the same: people see a girl, usually in white pyjamas or something equally out of place in the middle of nowhere at night and they get her into the car. Some versions say she’ll startle you and make you have an accident (or kill you, even), some that you will look back to find nothing but clothes or a jacket you lent her or even that you will give her a ride to an abandoned house... There are many variations!

Other stories of the like include people that died in accidents and whose spirits want to warn you about being careful when driving past that point of the road. Some people have seen a boy that died in a motorbike accident make them gestures so they’ll go slower once they reach that part of the road.

It is certainly an interesting story and one I don’t have a desire to live... makes you happy you don’t drive, even XD

As for the driverless taxis, that’s much... weirder? I hadn’t read much about that and it’s rather unnerving...

As always, a great post, thanks for all the work you put into this website, I can’t wait to buy your book as soon as I can!

Have a good day!

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Hold The Butter! A Brief History of Gorging

thechirurgeonsapprentice.com

Hold The Butter! A Brief History of Gorging

Nov26 by The Chirurgeon's Apprentice



5

'Tis the season for gorging! Mince pies, buttery rolls, homemade stuffing, turkey joints...all topped off with a dollop of cranberry sauce. In January, we'll all heave a collective groan as we step onto the scales for the first time and face the consequences of our gluttony.

You may think that obesity is largely a symptom of the modern world, but the battle of the bulge has been raging for centuries.



2

One of the most famous corpulent characters from the past was a man named Daniel Lambert [left]. Born on 13 March, 1770, Lambert was slim

and athletic throughout most of his boyhood. Then, in 1791, he took over from his father as the Keeper of Leicester's House of Correction on Highcross Street. It was at this point that young Lambert's waistline began expanding at an extraordinary rate. Within two years, he had ballooned to 483 pounds; and by 1804, he weighed a whopping 686 pounds. A year later, the House of Correction closed, and Lambert found himself out of a job and unemployable due to his extraordinary size.

Sensitive about his weight, Lambert withdrew and became reclusive. His meagre pension, however, could not sustain the needs of a man whose enormous suits cost £20 (or £1,440 in today's money!) Not wanting to become a sideshow freak, but unable to feed or clothe himself, Lambert did the only thing he could. In March, 1806, the *Stamford Mercury* reported: "Daniel Lambert is having a special carriage built to convey himself to London where he means to exhibit himself as a natural curiosity." Once settled in the capital, Lambert began charging people for access to view him. Over the next 6 months, he became minor celebrity. All sorts of people visited him at his home, including King George III.

Eventually, Lambert returned to Leicester. He traveled the country periodically to raise money, although by then, he was a very rich man. In 1809, Lambert died shaving at the age of 39 while staying at the Wagon & Horses Inn in Stamford, during what he intended to be his final tour. At the time of his death, his waist measured an incredible 9'4" in circumference [picture of his breeches below], and his calf measured 3'1". Lambert weighed 739 pounds—approximately a third of the weight of a modern-day Mini Cooper. The wall of the inn had to be dismantled to remove his corpse. Lambert's coffin—which was

constructed from 156 square feet of wood—had to be supported on wheels, and it took 20 men to lower it down a ramp into the grave.



3

Medical interest in obesity has a long history. In the 17th century, several discoveries were made that helped doctors understand how the human body processed and stored food. In 1614, the Italian physician Santorio invented a movable platform attached to a steelyard scale [below] that allowed him to quantify changes in the bodyweight of his subjects. This allowed Santorio to measure metabolic rates in humans for the very first time.



_100

Further contributions were made by Theophile Bonet, who became the first anatomist to dissect obese cadavers, and he documented his findings in 1679. His work was taken up in the following century by the Italian anatomist Giovanni Battista Morgagni, who recorded the first case of hardened arteries in the corpse of an obese male. By 1727, the first monograph on obesity

and the treatment of the condition appeared; and by the 19th century, there was a proliferation of literature on the subject, as people's concern about obesity grew with their waistlines.

The Age of Dieting had begun.

Probably one of the most successful diets of the Victorian period (and beyond) was down to a man named William Banting, who self-published a booklet entitled *Letter on Corpulence* in 1863. In it, he proclaimed success with the first "low carb" diet, imposed upon him by his physician, a William Harvey of Soho Square. The regimen included eating four meals a day, each consisting of meat, greens, fruits, and dry wine. The emphasis was on avoiding sugar, starch, beer, milk and butter.

The pamphlet's popularity was such that the question "Do you bant?" – alluding to Banting's method – became commonplace, and eventually came to refer to dieting in general. Incredibly, Banting's booklet remains in print today.

We may all need a copy come January!

6 comments on "Hold The Butter! A Brief History of Gorging"



1. Renée says:

December 2, 2015 at 5:19 AM

Excellent blog, as all of them are. I wonder if you know of George Cheyne's work? He was an 18th century physician, marvellously corpulent, and delightfully fixated on diet, on food and drink, on anxiety about his own body. He recommended vegetarianism for weight loss, after trying it out himself. I'm curious if he was one of the first, in this regard? (although it was a borrowed

behaviour, I believe, so likely not).



• The Chirurgeon's Apprentice says:
December 2, 2015 at 9:14 AM

Thanks so much for your kind words! Funny enough, I do know a bit about Cheyne because one of my Masters students did his dissertation on him. I believe he is one of the first, though whether he is the absolute first, I couldn't say.



2. Whewell's Gazette: Year2, Vol. #20 | Whewell's Ghost says:
December 1, 2015 at 6:42 PM

[...] The Chirurgeon's Apprentice: Hold the Butter! A Brief History of Gorging [...]



3. Mary Jean Adams says:
November 27, 2015 at 3:39 PM

I'd be curious to know if dieting was as popular among women as it was among men at that time.



4. Yumna says:
November 27, 2015 at 2:04 PM

Reblogged this on VINTAGE STUDENT.



5. feliciau says:
November 26, 2015 at 3:43 PM

Ohh, I love the fact that he was called Banting. You see, in Sweden the act of "dieting" by denying yourself food is called "bantning". Guess that's where it comes from. Great piece as always, thank you!

AUTHOR: DR LINDSEY FITZHARRIS

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Homeless gnomes: Pennsylvania state park evicts tiny houses yahoo.com

Retrieved Feb. 25th 2016 12.37 am pst

7 hours ago

AP

NEWPORT, Pa. (AP) — Nearly 40 gnome homes have been evicted from a Pennsylvania state park after a decision change sent them packing.

Pennlive.com reports (<http://bit.ly/1Qyu9NG>) that park management at Little Buffalo State Park gave permission for Steve Hoke to create the mini, magical houses in December. Since then, he has made 38 tiny houses in tree roots, hollow logs and on stumps around the forest near Newport, about 25 miles northwest of Harrisburg.

Associated Press

He says the houses were a major attraction for children.

Park Manager Jason Baker tells the news site he gave the OK originally, but it was later decided the homes could affect wildlife habitat.

Hoke removed the little abodes Monday after being told he had until Feb. 29.

Duncannon and Millerstown have both offered to house them in local parks.

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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Homeopathy successfully turns water into a placebo

by Beth Mole - Feb 20, 2016 8:00am PST
Feb 20, 2016 8:00am PST

arstechnica.com



Wonderlane

After a thorough evaluation of 57 scientific reviews that encompassed 176 studies on 68 illnesses, a panel of health experts has once again concluded that homeopathy is at best a placebo (when it's not being potentially harmful).

Homeopathy, which one of the panel members referred to as a “therapeutic dead-end,” is based on the idea

that “like cures like” (a questionable proposition to start with). Thus, its practitioners claim that if you take a substance that causes a sickness or similar symptoms of a sickness, then dilute it—to the point where the result is plain water—you create a cure. There's no mechanism that can possibly explain this, but some tout the idea that water has memory that can retain therapeutic information after dilution has removed every last molecule of the “healing” substance.



Diluting the scientific method: Ars looks at homeopathy

These are centuries-old ideas, and we now know they defy basic knowledge of physics, chemistry, and biology. Accordingly, they've long been

dismissed by the vast majority of modern scientists and physicians. All that hasn't stopped homeopathy believers. In 2007, about 3.3 million Americans spent \$2.9 billion on the industry. In the UK, the National Health Service picks up a \$5.74 million (£4 million) check for two homeopathic hospitals and various water treatments.

The numbers, while puzzling, may appear harmless at first. People have the right to spend their money on what they wish, and there is no inherent danger in drinking a bit of water. But there is potential for homeopathy to injure patients, according to the expert panel, the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).

“People who choose homeopathy may put their health at risk if they reject or delay treatments for which there is good evidence for safety and effectiveness,” the NHMRC concluded.

In a blog post, one of the NHMRC members, evidence-based medicine expert Paul Glasziou of Bond University, said he was “shocked” that homeopathic practitioners promote

homeopathy treatments for infectious diseases like AIDS and malaria.

Perhaps what's more shocking was Glasziou's open-mindedness going into the review:

"I had begun the journey with an "I don't know" attitude, curious about whether this unlikely treatment could ever work. Still, who would have believed that bacteria caused peptic ulcers, or that vaccines for cancers would become routine. So just maybe....but I lost interest after looking at the 57 systematic reviews (on 68 conditions) which contained 176 individual studies and finding no discernible convincing effects beyond placebo.

To address skeptics who might point to some data in homeopathy's favor, Glasziou noted:

Of course, with 176 trials we would expect a few p-values under five percent just by chance: 1/20 of 176 is about 9 which luck would class as "statistically significant." So we relied on replication and systematic reviews to avoid such false positives.

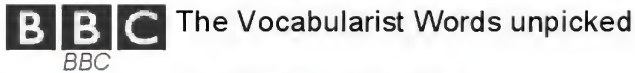
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The Vocabularist: How target once meant shield - BBC News

bbc.com



■ 23 February 2016



Arrows on target

Image copyrightiStock

Boris Johnson was last week described as the "top target" for Brexit campaigners to front their campaign. But what are the roots of the word target?

Measures are said to target cancer cells or domestic abuse, while overseas aid can be targeted at those who most deserve it. Reaching a

target means success in military and business terms, but setting targets in fields such as health or education invites controversy. Where does the word come from?

Targe meaning a little round shield seems to have come from a Teutonic word for a rim, like the German **zarge** meaning frame. There is also a Spanish word **adarga** for a shield, reflecting the Arabic **al-daraq**.

The Oxford English Dictionary believes **targe**, of which **target** is a diminutive, came into English twice, the first time via Scandinavia, the second from French.

This might explain the puzzle of the pronunciation. The rule is complicated - think of nugget and forget - but still we might expect the g to be soft in target, as it is in large (and targe).

Certainly there were two forms of the word - **target** and **targat**. In the mid-16th Century the king's "sword, his target and his helm" were reportedly carried in a procession. At the same time Roger Ascham was writing of Roman soldiers covering themselves "with theyre shyldes and targattes".

Our word seems to have inherited the spelling of one form and the pronunciation of the other.

The recorded use of target as something to aim at came quite late. Older words for the same thing are **butts** (15th Century) and **mark** (13th Century).

A paper called the True Patriot in February 1746 proposed rewards for the soldier in each company "who shoots best at a target."

Its general use as an intended victim appeared soon after. In a satirical poem of 1757 the

hymn-writer Edward Perronet calls an opponent "the target of the Muse" (ie of writers).

A note explained that the word was "used in the military sense, and signifies a But or mark to be shot at" suggesting that this sense was still not very well known.

Later, target became used for an objective or aspiration. During World War Two, with its fundraising drives and production speed-ups, the concept of target-setting became very common.

In 1942 the Times reported that Coventry was "set a target" of raising £1,250,000 for a new cruiser. The following year the salvage authorities "set themselves a target" of rescuing 50 million books from bomb-damaged buildings.

Because target originally meant shield, the verb "to target" could mean protect, the opposite of what it often means today.

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How the Quagga, an Extinct Zebra Sub-species, Is Being Revived

by Jesslyn Shields
February 25, 2016

howstuffworks.com



"The Quahkah," a hand-colored aquatint engraving of a quagga, from Samuel Daniell's 1805 book "African Scenery and Animals." [nglf](#).
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by Laurie L. Dove

When the last quagga mare died at the Amsterdam Zoo on Aug. 12, 1883, no one realized she was the last of her kind.

The quagga, a subspecies of the plains zebra (*Equus quagga*), had a distinctly different striping pattern with solid-colored hindquarters. It also had a background color that was a darker brown than a typical zebra. The quagga once roamed South Africa in

large herds before being hunted into extinction.



Scientists believe that 99% of the estimated 50 billion species that have ever lived on Earth have disappeared through extinction. This is a natural process typically, but it can also be cataclysmic and it's becoming clear we are amid a massive one.

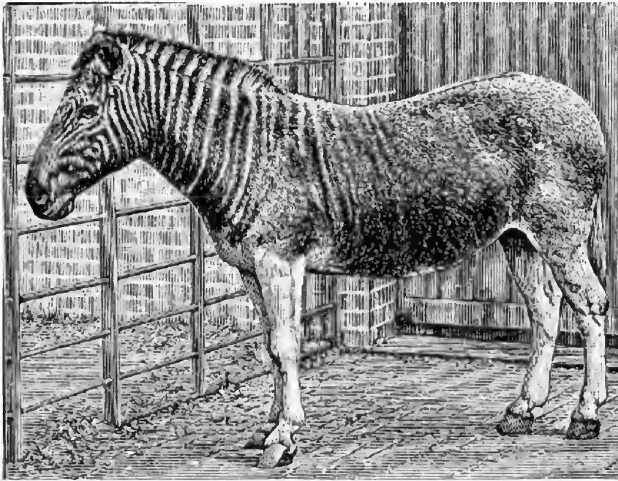
Now, thanks to the Quagga Project at a private nature reserve about 55 miles (90 kilometers) northeast of Cape Town, South Africa, the quagga — or at least a zebra that very much looks like a quagga — is coming back to life.

In the mid-1980s, after studying DNA evidence taken from the preserved coats of quaggas, scientists hypothesized the quagga's genetics might still be present in the DNA of plains zebras that roam near the quagga's geographic origin in South Africa. They were right.

So knowing that quagga and zebra are genetically identical but express different traits was essential. (Think of how much physical variety there is between different dog breeds, but they're all the same species.) From this plains zebra herd, 19 animals that retained hints of quagga traits — namely, fewer stripes on their hindquarters and a darker background color across the rear half of the body — were collected for a breeding program.

During the next 30 years, the South African zebras were selectively bred to emphasize the quagga's color traits and only the offspring that had quagga traits were kept in the breeding program. With each generation, there was a decrease in the hindquarter stripes and an

increase in the intensity of the brown background color. This brought the quagga one step closer to reality, with one important exception.



quagga, zebra, extinct animals

An engraving of photograph by Frederick York of London, circa 1870, pictures a quagga mare in the London Zoo

Although the Quagga Project is producing animals that increasingly look like quaggas, there may be some nuanced behavioral or other traits that can't be recovered from the extinct species. To that end, this resurrected sub-species is often called the rau-quagga after one of the project's original creators, Reinhold Rau.

"We can get the appearance, at least, of the quagga back by a simple selective breeding program," says Eric Harley, a geneticist and professor at Cape Town University who is the leader of the Quagga Project.

As of January 2016, there are 100 animals in the breeding program, with six offspring that carry the traits to be called a rau-quagga. The goal, says Harley, is to have 50 rau-quagga in a self-sustaining herd.

Now That's Tragic

In 1886, the Cape Town government enacted legislation to protect the quagga from extinction — three years after the last existing quagga died in an Amsterdam zoo. Oops.

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How to defraud your lord on the medieval manor - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

February 26, 2014 By Medievalists.net

In the 1260s, Robert Carpenter, a freehold farmer and former bailiff living on the Isle of Wight, wrote up a formulary – a collection of form letters and legal texts that would be useful for local administration. In the middle of these texts, however, he added detailed instructions on six ways you could commit fraud.



Medieval fraud

This work has been translated and analyzed by Martha Carlin in her article 'Cheating the Boss: Robert Carpenter's Embezzlement Instructions (1261×1268) and Employee Fraud in Medieval England'. Carpenter does not provide any introduction to these texts, nor does he give a hint on why he decided to include it in this work. Some scholars suggest he was bragging about his past exploits, others that he wrote it to warn his readers of ways they could be defrauded. Carlin adds another possibility – that it was "simply as a form of wry recollection or

humour with which to entertain himself and his intimates."

Carpenter's first fraud is a simple one – if you are a bailiff or reeve that managed a flock of sheep, you would know that not all breeding ewes would have lambs during a year. When reporting you the numbers you could misrepresent the totals, giving an example of how to get 12 lambs for yourself out of a flock of 150.

The second fraud occurs when you go to sell lambskins – if you have 160 lambskins you would take 25 of the best lambskins and sell them for a penny each, then use that money to buy 50 lambskins for a half-penny each. After that you could replace the lambskins you took and deliver them to your lord, while keeping the other 25 for your own use.

The third fraud is "to make a sheepskin appear to be that of a ewe that died of murrain. As soon as it it flayed, let the skin be placed in hot water and then immediately dried, and it will become as if the ewe were dead of murrain." In this way, you would convince everyone that the animal was diseased and that's it flesh could not be eaten – meanwhile the flesh, which is really fine could be yours to eat or sell,

The fourth fraud involves two shepherds working together – as long as they both manage flocks with the same brand. They steal three sheep from one flock, which they can sell, but when it comes time for the flock to be counted, you would borrow the three sheep from the other flock. Later on, when both flocks are together on a common pasture, these three sheep

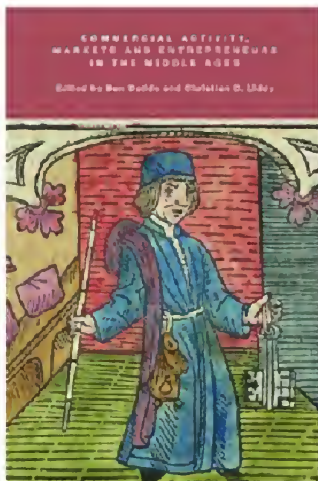
would then naturally return to their own flock.

The fifth fraud was one to be directed against a shepherd – when the sheep are to be sheered, one will find that some of the wool is damaged or of poor quality. You would keep this substandard wool separate from the rest, and when it came time to measure the wool, you would have this portion used. This could allow you to blame the shepherd for not taking good care of his flock, and perhaps fine or punish him.

The final fraud involved cheese-making, which was done during the spring and summer. Carpenter writes:

First, on the day when they begin to make cheeses, let the milk be divided equally into eight parts, and let the eighth part be kept until the following day, and from the other parts let one cheese be made immediately. And the next day, let the milk be divided in the same manner, and one that day let two parts be taken from the milk, and let the first part, which was taken first, be poured into the other milk, from which the cheese is made immediately. And thus every day let the milk be renewed. And on the seventh day you will have eight portions of new milk and six portions from the previous day, and thus one the seventh day you will make two cheese of the same size as the others.

This last fraud is particularly ingenious, as the amount of milk you take each day will only make the size of cheese 1/8 smaller, which won't likely be noticed by your lord, and you do not risk your milk spoiling. At the end of each week you have enough milk to make an extra cheese, which you can eat or sell yourself.



Commercial Activity Markets and Entrepreneurs in the Middle Ages

Carlin notes that even in the Middle Ages there was employee fraud – various records show that rulers and lords were trying to make sure that their servants were not trying to embezzle their money or goods. The fifteenth-century writer Christine de Pisan explains in her book *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* that “there are some dishonest chambermaids who are given great responsibility because they know how to insinuate themselves into the great houses of the middle classes and of rich people by cleverly acting the part of good household managers. They get their position of buying the food and going to the butcher’s, where they only too well “hit the fruit basket”, which is a common expression meaning to claim that thing cost more than it really does and then keep the change.”

Carlin concludes, “Robert Carpenter’s embezzlement instructions do not tell us anything new about moral compromise in medieval England, but they do offer an unusual window onto the practical logistics of employee fraud, and they make it clear that, like employee fraud today, systematic pilfering by corrupt manorial officers and other workers could well have siphoned off a

significant fraction of medieval manorial production.”

Her article, ‘Cheating the Boss: Robert Carpenter’s Embezzlement Instructions (1261×1268) and Employee Fraud in Medieval England’ appears in *Commercial Activity, Markets and Entrepreneurs in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Richard Britnell*, edited by Christian D. Liddy (Boydell, 2011). Martha Carlin is a Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she specializes in daily life in the Middle Ages. Her most recent book is *English Society, 1200-1250: Lost Letters of Everyday Life*.

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Human Zoo: For Centuries, Indigenous Peoples Were Displayed as Novelties

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Human Zoo: For

Centuries, Indigenous Peoples Were Displayed as Novelties

Sara Shahriari

8/30/11

In 1893 a group of indigenous Aymara Bolivian men traveled to the United States so that they could be put on display at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair Columbian Exposition, which celebrated the 400th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas. While researching their story, Nancy Egan, a doctoral student in Latin American history at the University of California, San Diego, delved into the history of indigenous people brought to the United States and Europe and put on display in what she calls "human zoos."



Buffalo Bill and Sitting Bull

Buffalo Bill and Sitting Bull

ICTMN: Indigenous people from all over the world were brought to the United States and Europe and displayed at fairs and circuses during the 1800s and 1900s. Why were these displays so popular?

Egan: Most historians who study these exhibitions agree they were a way of reinforcing or illustrating the racist notions of white supremacy that seemed to be built into the logic of empire and colonialism. Most nations took great care to try and mold the people they put on display into images that justified their own colonial power. In some cases this meant trying to create "savages." In other cases, they tried to use these displays of human beings to

illustrate how the colonial presence was "civilizing" people. These exhibits also played into other forms of popular entertainment. They were a mix of imperial ambition and circus.

You studied a group of indigenous Aymara Bolivians who were brought to New York

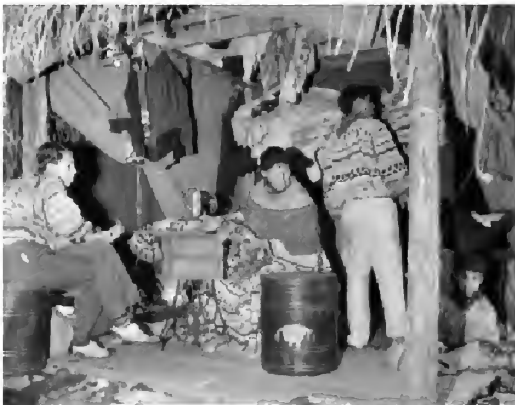
destined for the Chicago fair, but got stranded in New York. What happened?

These men were brought to the U.S. to be displayed at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, but they never made it to Chicago. They attempted to make a living putting on their own musical shows in New York and Philadelphia, but everywhere they went they were basically told that they weren't exotic enough. After an unsuccessful tour with a circus through Philadelphia, the group was abandoned by their managers and José Santos Mamani, the member of the group dubbed the "giant" by the press, died shortly after they walked back to New York City. The rest of the group eventually found work in fairs and on Coney Island, but could only find work making feather headdresses and performing supposed North American Native American dances for a New York audience. They struggled to make it back to Bolivia, and I've only been able to trace them as far as Panama on their return journey.

How was what Mamani and his companions went through similar to the experience of other "imported" indigenous people who came to the United States?

Their story definitely sounds exceptional, but what's really shocking about the history of these "human zoos" is that it isn't. One study I read estimated that more than 25,000 indigenous people were brought to fairs around the world between 1880 and 1930. These people struggled under harsh and changing conditions. Many of them had to change their hair, their clothes, their entire appearance to fit the expectations of the organizers and the audiences they were supposed to perform for. Some people were the targets of racist violence while they were on display, while others experienced more subtle forms of violence and were used as subjects of scientific study on racial differences during the exhibition. And, like Mamani, many people died during these exhibitions.

American Indians from the United States were often exhibited alongside indigenous people from other continents. Was the logic behind



Seminole Indians from the Florida Everglades at the New York World's Fair

Seminole Indians from the Florida Everglades at the New York World's Fair

exhibiting Indigenous Peoples from the United States similar to the logic behind exhibiting Indigenous Peoples from other countries?

The U.S. government resisted allowing official exhibits of North American Indigenous Peoples until after Wounded Knee in 1890, and viewed shows like Buffalo Bill's [Wild West Show] as either a semi-threatening glorification of Native Americans or a crass, unscientific form of entertainment. The U.S.

preferred exhibits that showed Native Americans as passive peoples. For example, in Chicago, the organizers worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to craft exhibits that would supposedly show how beneficial and "civilizing" reservation life and boarding schools were for Native Americans. After occupying the Philippines in 1898, the U.S. created exhibits of Filipinos that included a "civilizing" school that the people on display had to attend. Shows of people from regions the U.S. had not colonized, such as African peoples at the Chicago fair,

played up rumors of cannibalism and their threatening nature. The logic behind these exhibits in different countries was directly tied to their imperial and colonial ambitions, and they tried to craft shows that would show people who had been, or would be able to be, colonized, and sell lots of tickets.

Didn't some Native American leaders fight against exhibits of indigenous people during the 1800s?

One of the most incredible things I found in the archives while researching this work was a series of petitions and letters written from reservations in the U.S. challenging the exhibition of Indigenous Peoples and cultures at the fair. This is a section from a petition from the Creek Territories in 1891 that was signed by more than 100 people expressing the group's wish to represent themselves through a Native American-directed exhibit at the fair:



Buffalo Bill standing with one of the big draws for his traveling show: Sitting Bull, circa 1890. Seminoles in a staged "domestic setting" at the New York World's Fair in 1939. A group of Chiricahua Apaches after attending Carlisle Indian school for four months Apaches on their first day at the Carlisle Indian School (above)—and here, four months later, circa 1886.

"We are almost despairing and it is inevitable that our people trace the cause of that despairing and consequently desperate condition to the very event which with such large expenditures of wealth you are about to celebrate. It is not fitting nor wise that you so celebrate a great event without considering what it meant and still means to a people once great in numbers.... With a Native American or Indian exhibit in the hands of capable men of our own blood, such as are willing and anxious to undertake it, a most interesting and instructive and surely successful feature will be added."

Another leader, Simon Pokagon, published his *Red Man's Rebuke* during the Chicago fair and distributed it to the press and the public-at-large outside of the fairgrounds in Chicago. At every turn, Native American and African American leaders took aim at the racist ideology of the fair, fought these portrayals and argued for the right to self-representation.



A group of Chiricahua Apaches after attending Carlisle Indian school for four months Apaches on their first day at the Carlisle Indian School (above)

Traveling to a different country and sharing time and space with a diverse group of people really changed some of the people who were on exhibit. What did you learn about their experiences?

In the security records of the fair in Chicago I found all these frustrated notes from security guards who were trying to prevent the people from different exhibits from socializing with one another. Apparently people from the different exhibits were hanging out and drinking beer with one another after the fair shut down. In another study, one where historians were actually able

—and here, four months later, circa 1886.

to interview indigenous women who had been part of the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904, those women spoke about the relationships they developed with other exhibited women and how they overcame language barriers to share their experiences. I think these stories captivated me because they show the importance of looking at the people who were brought to be exhibited as complete human beings and asking: What did they think about what they saw and experienced? What did they feel about the other people they met? It's easier to think about these 'human zoos' as spaces you look into. Thinking about these men and women socializing and struggling makes me wonder what they thought of these spaces and events as they looked out.

When did "importing" indigenous people to put on display begin to end, and why?

Because the rationale behind these exhibits was so closely tied to the logics of empire, or the exhibition of empire, many of these exhibits began to disappear when the European empires began to decline, but they also began to change form before then. In a historical study of these events, titled *Human Zoos*, several historians propose that these exhibitions began to emphasize showing cultural differences instead of racial ones by the 1920s. However, some forms of these exhibits continued well into the 20th century, and certainly, using the logic of cultural difference to justify political, economic and military domination has not disappeared.

1 Comment

veronicahp

Submitted by veronicahp on

From genocide to display and performance. Truly strange, sick, and darkly fascinating. It's the kind of thing that keeps this Native PhD student in grad school, too. Just an FYI, Carlisle founder Richard Pratt protested the Midway vehemently, and had to push very hard to get his students exhibited at Columbia. When he did, their area was all-but ignored. Assimilated Indians aren't as fun to gaze at, apparently. (See Lee Baker's "Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture." Duke U Press, 2010) What I find most inspiring about Egan's research are the available archival resources she uncovered, which I've never seen in the ample World's Fair scholarship! I've never seen anything about the Creek letters or the security guards complaining about those dang intermingling Indians. Better police racial purity to keep the 19th century anthros in business. Hmmm...makes me wonder about the accepted narratives we researchers are buying into. Thanks for this!

March 01, 2016

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Bison bones found at lake bottom tell few tales

ALEXANDRIA, Minn.

startribune.com

A state archaeologist found that the number and condition of the bones found in an Alexandria lake hint at an American Indian gathering place — a bison kill site, hundreds or perhaps thousands of years old.

By Jenna Ross Star Tribune

March 4, 2016 — 9:38am



Roger Van Surksum, a fishing guide, points out the exact spot on Lake Victoria in Alexandria where he happened to catch a bison bone on his fishing line in 2011.

— On a windy, much warmer day on this lake, Roger Van Surksum snagged the first bison bone with a fishing hook. The fishing guide knew it was no walleye and reeled it in slowly, carefully. The bone was 10 inches long, he said, “as black as the ace of spades.”

He put it in the back of his truck but couldn’t get it out of his mind.

“I had to figure out what it was,” said Van Surksum, 69, standing near the shore of Lake Victoria in Alexandria this week.

He enlisted the help of two divers and, over the summer of 2011, they brought up more than 250 bones from the bottom of the lake on the east edge of Alexandria, in central Minnesota. Then Van Surksum pestered experts for answers. A state archaeologist found that the number and condition of the bison bones hint at an American Indian gathering place — a bison kill site, hundreds or perhaps thousands of years old.

“This could be a really important place ... where a part of Minnesota history has been preserved,” said Brian Hoffman, chairman of the anthropology department at Hamline University in St. Paul.

Until recently, little was done to determine the bones’ age or origin. But this semester, a St. Cloud State University class is studying core samples taken from the lake’s bottom, which could reveal clues to the area’s past or even evidence of human settlement.

Van Surksum brought the students out on the ice in late January, to the point marked on his GPS, watching as they collected sediment samples that today bear his name. He remains anxious for answers.

“Who lived here?” said Van Surksum, who began guiding fishing trips after retiring from auto sales. “What kind of human inhabited this area?”



St. Cloud State University student University Cate Knudsen split one of the bison bone samples from Lake Victoria in Alexandria, Minn., this week at the University of Minnesota. In recent weeks, a St. Cloud State team took the samples from the bottom of the lake. They could provide a record of human settlement on the site.

"I'm not an archaeologist, but I'll tell you what: I turned into one."

In search of walleye, Van Surksum has caught some strange things: blankets, hats, minnow boxes. "A basket full of sunfish," he said with a half-smile. "They were still wiggling."

But never before a bone. At first, Van Surksum couldn't tell whether it had come from a creature — or a person. He brought it to a butcher shop, then an undertaker. Not cow, not human.

"This is not an everyday finding, here," Van Surksum remembered thinking.

He gave the bone to his daughter-in-law, who was working at St. Cloud State University. She called one

day with a match: It was a bison bone.

Turns out, it was far from the only one. Using the GPS coordinates, divers began collecting the bones — 10 on the first trip, more than 100 on the next. Ribs, jaw bones, vertebrae. A photo from 2011 shows how Van Surksum laid them out on his driveway, awaiting a visit from David Mather, the National Register archaeologist for the Minnesota Historical Society.

The find sounded interesting, especially due to its "very unusual setting" under water, Mather said recently. "I was very curious to know whether this was a cultural site or a natural accumulation of bison bones."

Mather took note of one bone that bore a gouge mark, possibly caused by a human tool. Van Surksum kept trying to steer the zooarchaeologist to the "perfect bones with no cracks in them," Van Surksum said. But Mather focused on the broken bones. The breaks curved along the bones, known as spiral fractures, showing that the bones were broken when fresh and perhaps pointing to human use.

American Indians — who used bison for food, shelter and tools — broke apart their bones to get the marrow, said Hoffman, the Hamline professor. "So that's really intriguing. To me, that suggests that this is an archaeological site, an American Indian site."

After his visit to Alexandria, Mather told Hoffman about the bones, which Van Surksum was storing in apple boxes, under newspaper. The once-black bones, which had begun to fossilize, had started growing lighter. Hoffman picked them up and brought them to St. Paul, with plans to date them.

But after doing an inventory, "basically that's been the end of it," Hoffman said. He needs a student to take the project, he said.

In a University of Minnesota lab last week, a dozen St. Cloud State students watched as a

curator slowly split open a core from Lake Victoria, revealing a mossy brown layer atop dark, sandy sediment. Tucked into it: a small shell.

"It'll be interesting finding out from biologists what that is," said Kate Pound, the geology professor leading the class. The students nodded.

They will take a closer look at the core samples' grain size and composition, keeping an eye out for anything that might have been brought by people, such as charcoal, Pound said.



Fishing guide Roger Van Surksun was driven by curiosity to find out the story behind the bone he found.

"When I read about the bison bones, I thought 'Ah-ha!'" she said. "Now we can use this work to really try and answer a question."

An excavation of the site could answer tricky questions: When did the bison die? Were they forced over the nearby cliff? Did hunters trap them out on the ice? Or did lower lake levels leave this land exposed?

But despite researchers' urging, no local museum has shown interest in applying for a grant for the work, Mather said. Investigating the site is more difficult because it's under water, he said.

While other archaeological sites have been plowed over, the lake has protected this one from development, "a fortuitous thing," Hoffman said.

At the same time, the site is vulnerable, he added. He's grateful that divers brought the site to researchers' attention, but "every time they pull up a bone ... we lose a little more of that picture."

The lake water was murky when divers first went down, Van Surksun said. But zebra mussels have since made it clearer. When the St. Cloud State team took core samples, Van Surksun and his friend lowered a camera, capturing objects that Van Surksun is sure are "so many more bones."

One afternoon last week, he walked to the lake's edge with his dog Kuma and pointed to where he was fishing more than four years ago.

"Early in the morning, I've stood out here, when it's really quiet," he said. "Sometimes you can almost hear the hoofs running over the cliff."

"It's kind of an echo in the air."

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Saturday, January 16, 2016

Illicit Infatuation.



On the surface, George and Fanny Crozier were a well-bred, churchgoing couple in a happy and stable marriage. But not too far beneath the surface, George's "illicit infatuation" with 18-year-old Minerva Dutcher, had long been the subject of rumor in the small town of Benton, New York. With Fanny Crozier's sudden death in the summer of 1875, George's desires became public knowledge, and small-town gossip turned to damning evidence against him.

Date: July 29, 1875

Location: Benton, New York

Victim: Fanny H. Crozier

Cause of Death: Poisoning

Accused: George E. Crozier

Synopsis:

George and Fanny Crozier were prominent, highly-regarded citizens of Benton, near the village of Penn Yan in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. Both came from good, moral, families and regularly attended Benton Center Baptist Church. In 1875, the couple—he 42 years old, she 39—had been married for twenty years and were making preparations for the marriage of their only son, Frank.



On July 15 of that year, Fanny Crozier was suddenly and without warning taken ill. She experienced severe burning pain in her stomach and back, dry throat, and mouth, and an intense, nearly constant thirst. She partially recovered, but on the night of July 27, she had another serious attack. The next day her physician, Dr. Barber, diagnosed her with gastritis and prescribed powders of sub-nitrate of bismuth, which were administered by her husband. The prescription did not help, and on July 29, Fanny Crozier died.

Mrs. Crozier was buried two days later, and the tragedy would have soon faded into memory, but for nagging suspicions of

friends and neighbors. Up the time she was stricken, Fanny had given no indication of anything but perfect health. Her husband had behaved suspiciously and seemed to be resigned to the fact that Fanny's situation was hopeless. In her dying hours he had turned away friends and relatives who came to bring help and comfort, and he adamantly refused to let anyone else near the prescribed powders. He told Dr. Barber that he did not want a post-mortem examination done on his wife.

Suspicion went beyond George Crozier's deathbed behavior, those who knew them could see that the Croziers' relationship was becoming strained and that George was not as faithful as he should have been. He had been inappropriately familiar with an 18-year-old girl named Minerva Dutcher. In fact, though not arousing suspicion at the time, the familiarity had begun four years earlier, when Crozier would stop by her school, and the teacher would give Minerva permission to go outside and chat with him.



George Crozier had probably met Minerva Dutcher at the Baptist Church where both sang in the choir. He sat directly behind her in the choir, and they would pass notes to each other and find opportunities while in church to steal away and chat privately. By 1875 the Croziers did not go to church together; Fanny would ride with her brother-in-law, and George would walk, more often than not meeting up with Minerva. George Crozier's "illicit infatuation" with a girl twenty-two years younger than he became the talk of the church.

The day after Fanny Crozier's burial, Sunday, August 1, George Crozier went to church and flirted with Minerva as if nothing had happened. "He went to church," the district attorney would later say, "not to receive consolations of religion, not to join in the worship of God or to gather strength from the sympathy of friends, but to prosecute with greater freedom his intrigues with Minerva Dutcher."

To help out his father, Frank Crozier went, with his new wife Emma, to live at his father's house. George told them they were not needed, as he had hired Minerva as his maid. They moved out and the following Saturday Minerva moved in. George and Minerva did not go to church that Sunday.

Suspicion became so widespread in Benton that an official investigation was demanded. The coroner ordered the body exhumed and the stomach and liver removed for analysis. John S. Towler, professor of chemistry and toxicology at the Medical College of Geneva, New York, did the analysis and found sixty grains of white arsenic, absorbed and unabsorbed in the stomach—enough arsenic to kill twelve people. The circumstantial evidence was strong enough to indict George Crozier for the murder of his wife.

Trial: March 6, 1876

The indictment had caused a schism in the Baptist Church between those who thought Crozier guilty and those who did not believe it was possible. By the time of the trial the whole town was divided, while most believed Crozier was guilty, a large contingent stood behind him.

The evidence against George Crozier was circumstantial but compelling. Witnesses testified to George's behavior before his wife's death, including his relationship with Minerva. There appeared to be no one else with the opportunity or motive to kill Fanny Crozier.

While not disputing the fact that Fanny Crozier was poisoned, the defense came up with two possible alternative scenarios. First, they asserted that the powders prescribed by Dr. Barber, sub-nitrate of bismuth, were known to contain small amounts of arsenic. Dr. Barber could have, accidentally or otherwise, given Fanny a prescription that killed her. Second, the defense proposed that Fanny Crozier had taken her own life. She was known to have purchased arsenic to kill rats, and the defense claimed that she thought she had stomach cancer and did not want to suffer.

It also came out that George Crozier had tried to suborn the testimony of his daughter-in-law, offering her money if she would swear that Fanny had told her she thought she had cancer.

The jury deliberated for two hours then returned a verdict of murder in the first degree.

Verdict: Guilty of first-degree murder.

Aftermath:

George E. Crozier was sentenced to hang on May 3, 1876. His defense attorneys planned to request a new trial, claiming that the testimony regarding Minerva Dutcher should not have been admissible unless Mrs. Crozier had known about the relationship and disapproved. Governor Tilden granted Crozier a respite until June 16, to allow further consideration of the case.

As the defense prepared their arguments, a petition, with the signatures of 800 supporters of George Crozier, was presented to the governor, requesting that he commute Crozier's sentence to life in prison. The governor agreed to this, with the understanding that there would be no new trial.

George E. Crozier spent the next twenty years in Auburn State Prison. He sang in the prison choir and reportedly was a model prisoner, except that he deliberately cut off one of his fingers to be removed from a work detail that he did not like.

Crozier died in prison in 1896, at the age of 63. He never confessed to killing his wife.

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Posted by Robert Wilhelm

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This is an incirrate octopod, but call him Casper

By Ed Payne , CNN Updated 5:26 AM ET, Sat March 5, 2016
2016-03-05T10:26:09Z

cnn.com



This ghostlike octopod was found northwest of Hawaii, near Necker Island.

Story highlights

- The ghostlike octopod was found more than 14,000 feet under water
- It may be part of a newfound species

(CNN)Some folks are calling him Casper. And this octopod does bear a certain resemblance to the friendly cartoon ghost.

A pale white billowy body with two black eyes will do that.

Scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration found the little creature northwest of Hawaii, near Necker Island, while filming with a remotely operated vehicle.

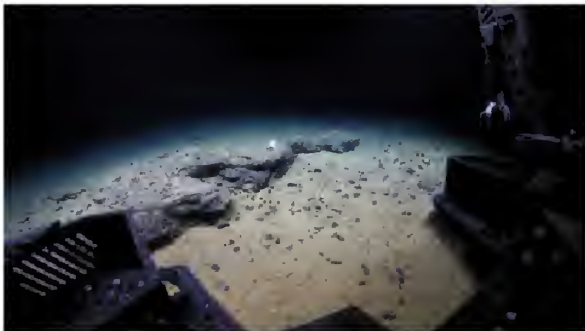
"It is almost certainly an undescribed species and may not belong to any described genus, said Michael Vecchione, with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service.

Octopods and octopuses are both members of the octopoda family, but are not the same thing.

Beside likely being a member of a newfound species, this octopod is unique for another reason.

It is the deepest dwelling incirrate, or unfinned, octopod ever found. The remotely operated vehicle was cruising the ocean floor more than 14,000 feet (4,290 meters) below the surface.

New species discovered



This octopod was found more than 14,000 feet underwater.

"Cirrate octopods have been reported to depth of over 5,000 meters," Vecchione said, referring to octopods that do have fins. "However, the deepest published reports for incirrates are all less than 4,000 meters."

Scientists, far from being spooked by Casper's appearance, are downright excited. Vecchione and his colleagues are considering putting their observations into a manuscript for publication in scientific literature.

From what we can see, they stand more than a ghost of a chance.

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India police fight public peeing with 'garlands of shame' - BBC News

bbc.com



By News from Elsewhere... as found by BBC Monitoring

• 22 February 2016



Police say they don't want to be high-handed with people, and describe the initiative as "citizen friendly"

Image copyright Hyderabad Traffic Police

Police in India have come up with an eye-catching way to shame people who urinate in public - by hanging flower garlands around their necks.

A new campaign in the city of Hyderabad sees traffic officers swoop on people spotted relieving themselves on the street, before handing them the colourful neckwear,

the Deccan Chronicle reports. Insp Rama Swamy says he got the idea after seeing social workers doing something similar in Delhi several years ago. "After garlanding them, we request them not to create filth and use the public toilets instead," he says. The force has also been handing out chocolates to scooter riders who wear helmets, in an attempt to persuade others to follow suit.

Many people commenting on the force's Facebook page applaud the initiative, although plenty think the problem could be solved with greater access to public facilities. "Construct public toilets first... Don't waste on flowers," one person writes. But others think it's more of an attitude problem. "Has anyone seen a woman doing this nonsense in public? Isn't she human too? And, if a woman can control, why cannot a man?" asks one user.

In 2015, police in China took a similar tack with jaywalkers. Any pedestrians caught dodging cars in the city of Shenzhen were given a choice between paying a small fine, or donning a green hat and tabard and helping the police to direct traffic.

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Instant noodles and formula milk are 'making babies gay' says Mayor

Indonesian mayor Arief R Wismansyah made these bizarre comments at a pregnancy seminar



According to this Mayor, there is a link between instant noodles and homosexuality According to this Mayor, there is a link between instant noodles and homosexuality Photo: Getty Photo: Getty

A city mayor in Indonesia has come under fire for suggesting instant noodles and formula milk are 'making babies gay'.

Arief R Wismansyah made the bizarre claim during a pregnancy seminar in the city, located to the west of Jakarta, earlier this week.

"To create Indonesian children that are healthy smart and competitive, the most important thing is, from the beginning, to provide them adequate nutrition, especially breastfeeding," Mr Wismansyah

said, according to Indonesian news website Okezone.

He said canned milk and instant noodles are being more and more heavily relied upon as parents are getting busier.

"It's no wonder there are more LGBT," he said.

He has also reportedly said: "God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Asep".



Wismansyah also blamed the internet and social media for spreading LGBT thoughts and views.

He said parents should keep up with technology to keep control of what websites their children are looking at.

These bizarre comments come after another Indonesian politician was criticised for saying the LGBT movement was potentially as dangerous as nuclear war.

Defense Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu said moves to see greater equality for all Indonesians put his country at risk.

"[The LGBT movement] is dangerous as we can't see who our foes are, but out of the blue everyone is brainwashed - now the (LGBT) community is

demanding more freedom, it really is a threat," he said.

Last month Indonesia's technology, research and higher education minister Muhammad Nasir said: "LGBT groups [in Indonesian universities] cannot be allowed to grow or be given any space for all of their activities. Especially because of the fact that LGBT communities enter universities by way of resource and research centres."

The hashtag #TolakLGBT has been recently trending in Indonesia – 'tolak' means reject – and the Indonesian Psychiatrists Association has labelled homosexuality and bisexuality as a mental disorder.

A report by a local NGO called Arus Pelangi (Indonesian for Rainbow Currents) has stated that over 89.3% of LGBT people have been victims of "psychological, physical, sexual, economic and cultural abuse".

A report by Pew Research Centre three years ago showed that more than 93% of Indonesians believe homosexuality should be rejected.

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Isle of Wight model triceratops left in middle of high street - BBC News

bbc.com

- 16 February 2016
- From the section Hampshire & Isle of Wight



The owner of the 25ft (7.6m)-model dinosaur said it takes about five men to move it

Image copyright Chris Hollingshead

A dinosaur was left in the middle of a high street courtesy of some "drunken pranksters", it is believed.

A 25ft (7.6m) model triceratops had to be removed from High Street in Godshill on the Isle of Wight after it was dragged from the Jurassic Garden.

Owner Martin Simpson said he was shocked to see the model appearing on social media over

the weekend.

The dinosaur is part of Mr Simpson's shop garden, where he sells prehistoric gems and fossils.

He said: "It takes about five blokes to move the dinosaur a couple of inches, so it was definitely a concerted effort and drink was probably involved."

He added he would now be securing the dinosaur to make sure the incident did not happen again.

A photo of the obstruction was taken by Chris Hollingshead, who spotted it when he was driving home from work on Saturday morning and later posted a photograph on social media.

Staff from Island Roads, which operates road maintenance on the island, returned the dinosaur to the Jurassic Garden.

A spokesperson said: "Three of our staff attended the scene and placed it back into the garden from where it had been removed.

"The road was reopened within a short period of our arrival on site."

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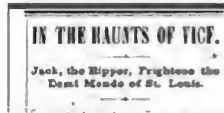
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Saturday, January 30, 2016

Jack the Ripper in St. Louis.

1 comments

(From *Salt Lake Tribune* , January 10, 1889)



THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERER.
St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 8.—A thorough scare exists in the worst haunts of vice in St. Louis to-night over a letter received today by chief of Police Huebler. The writer claims to be the genuine author of the horrible murder atrocities committed in Whitechapel, London. The letter is dated in St. Louis and is as follows:

Chief Huebler and the City Police:-- Gents:--
I wish you to have fare warning. I am for business, coming *Frida* from N. York and have canvassed Clark Avenue and some other places and have spotted four victims already. My knives are in good order and I will send you the lungs of every other woman I kill. You need not look for me. You can't find; I don't hide, have been all over town and talked to all your detectives. I can fool this town easier than London. I will operate in three streets, Spruce, Clark Avenue, and Thirteenth Streets. The word of God must be obeyed and sin must be abolished. My nerves are strong and true as ever. I have seen you once, now you have warning *enuff*. Tell them to repent soon. Ha. Ha. Look for blood in ten days. They call me *Jack the Ripper*.

Whether this correspondent is "Jack the Ripper," or a crank, he has succeeded in alarming the localities mentioned and Chief Huebler has promised the score or more wayward women who have appealed to him that extra police precautions will be taken in the threatened district.

The Whitechapel Murderer.

Jack the Ripper

Whether this correspondent is "Jack the Ripper," or a crank, he has succeeded in alarming the localities mentioned and Chief Huebler has promised the score or more wayward women who have appealed to him that extra police precautions will be taken in the threatened district.

Posted by Robert Wilhelm

1 comments :

LadyMama says:

January 31, 2016 at 12:18 AM

Did they ever hear from him again?

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The PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

Japanese Depictions of North Americans (1860s)



US-jap-banner

selection of *Yokohama-e* (literally “Yokohama pictures”), a type of *ukiyo-e* Japanese woodblock print which focused on depicting the foreigners who flooded through Yokohama during the 1860s and 70s, in particular North Americans. Prints from various artists are shown below including two of the most prolific in this *Yokohama-e* form, Utagawa Yoshitora and Utagawa Yoshikazu.

Although the Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch had engaged in regular trade with Japan during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Japan had limited its trade and contact with the West from 1639 onwards due to the persistent attempts by Europeans to convert the population to Catholicism and the western countries’ habit of unfair trading practices. For the next two centuries, limited trade access was granted only to certain Dutch and Chinese ships with special charters.

The United States’ interest in regaining contact with Japan during the nineteenth century sprung from the annexation of California, which created an American port in the Pacific, enabling trade with the newly opened ports of China, and also creating the need for coaling stations en route. The Treaty of Kanagawa was signed in March 1854, leading to the opening of two Japanese ports, as well as the establishing of an American consul in Japan. Although Kanagawa was meant to become the port for foreign trade and residency, it was located along the Tōkaidō, the main east-west road which the Japanese government didn’t want foreigners to access. Instead, the small fishing village of Yokohama grew to become the base for foreign trade, opening in 1859. Through these Westerners who came to Yokohama, western fashion, photography, ice cream, rugby, and cricket were introduced to Japan.

For more on a similar theme see our post on Japanese prints from the 1870s depicting Western inventors, artists, and scholars.



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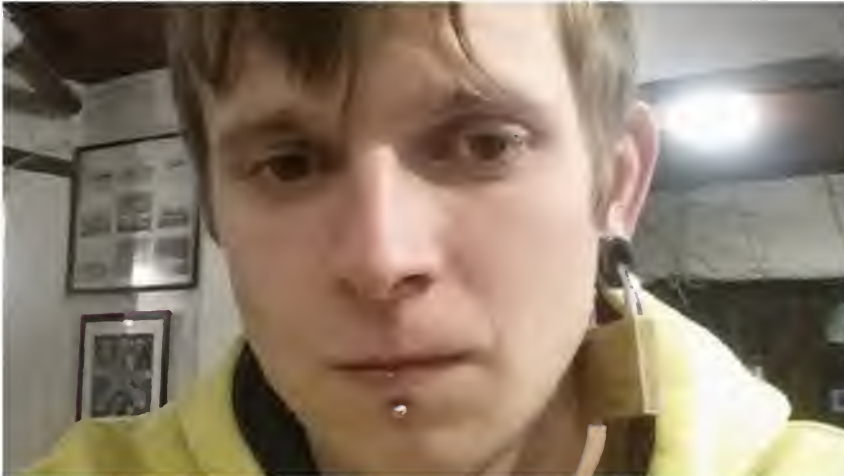
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'Someone's padlocked my ear'

stuff.co.nz

stuff.co.nz Man left furious after jokers attached a padlock to his ear

Last updated 13:29, March 4 2016



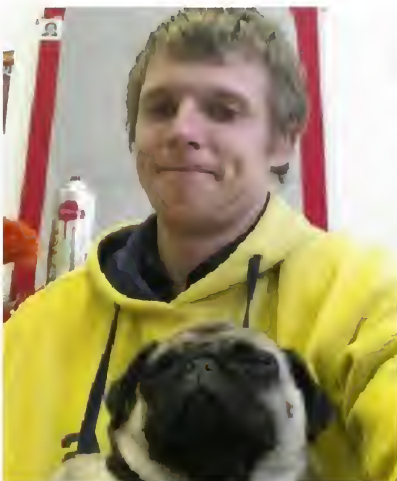
Facebook/Tom Grim Fandango Matthews Matthews wrote that he "heard a click" then realised there was a padlock on his ear.

A man was left fuming after someone sneakily padlocked his ear.

The man, who calls himself Tom Grim Fandango Matthews on Facebook, claimed that a stranger had snuck up on him and attached the lock to his ear stretcher.

He explained that he was having a cigarette "out back" when he "heard a click turned

round realised they're was a padlock on my ear and tried to chase em. [sic]"



Facebook/Tom Grim Fandango Matthews Matthews was furious that someone had crept up on him.

He posted a picture of the lock on the social media site, along with an angry threat to the culprit.

But if he was expecting sympathy, or someone to join him in his rage, he was disappointed.

His friends just found the whole thing hilarious.

"Can I just ask how you didn't notice someone f***** about with your ear?" one wrote.

Another suggested: "Get yourself to the diy shop and give em a fiver to cut it off. After they've stopped taking pictures."

And a helpful mate added: "I can pick locks, £10 an hour tho! [sic]"

The jokes came thick and fast too: "Ear you should be locked up looking like that!"

The picture has now been shared round the world.

Matthews, who appears to be from the UK, later posted that "old boy lived up the road and had bolt cutters", suggesting his jewellery had successfully been released from the lock. Phew.

Send us your photos, videos and tip-offs:

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<http://www.worldwideweirdnews.com/2016/02/28-Kids-play-mock-funeral-bury-2-year-old-girl-alive.html>

Retrieved Feb 29th 10:08pm PST USA

Kids play mock funeral and bury 2-year-old girl alive



Cemetery (illustration)

By: Mahesh Sarin

(Scroll down for video) A young girl lost her life while playing with her friends, who decided to imitate a real funeral.

Police in Kenya, said that the incident was a tragic accident.

The two-year-old girl was living with her grandparents in Kakamega, while her mother was in another city for work.

The two-year-old girl went out to play with other children, who are between two and 7 years old.

The children decided to make a mock funeral. They dug a grave and put the 2-year-old inside. They then added water and covered the grave with dirt.

According to investigators, the children then sang traditional funeral songs. When the children removed the dirt to free the child, they realized that she was dead.

They pulled her out and dumped her body in a banana field. When the girl failed to return home, her grandparents asked for help.

Her body was recovered. However, the 7-year-old boy is still missing. Police believe that he fled the village out of fear.

Community leaders said that after giving the girl a proper burial, they will they will hold a cleansing ritual for the children involved in her death.

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Sick satanic ritual: Group of friends 'kill pal in cult ceremony to turn him into vampire'

express.co.uk


EXPRESS

Home of
the Daily and
Sunday Express

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Sick satanic ritual: Group of friends 'kill pal in cult ceremony to turn him into vampire'

POLICE have arrested three people accused of killing a

friend they were trying to turn into a vampire during a satanic ceremony at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.

PUBLISHED: 09:49, Mon, Mar 7, 2016 | UPDATED: 15:49, Mon, Mar 7, 2016

Tragic restaurant worker Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle.

The horrific crime happened near the regional congress building in Chihuahua in the north of Mexico.

A teenage girl named as 18-year-old student Iveth Lopez is among those being held.



This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire.

Pablo Rocha, Police chief

The other two suspects were named as Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25.

Police say Edwin, known as Piwa, was killed after being fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult

called the Sons of Baphomet 1.

Instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers persuaded the others their victim should be sacrificed so he could return to life as a vampire.

Police were alerted last Tuesday after his body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder off as a drugs-related crime.

Officers found traces of the victim's blood inside the cyber cafe, which belongs to the older of the two men being held, after obtaining a search warrant when a protected witness told them how Edwin had been killed.

The murder reportedly took place inside the toilets late at night and the killers are said to have used bleach to try to clean up the scene of the crime.

A fourth person described as the leader of the sect is on the run from police.



PH

Police announced the arrests yesterday as they revealed details of the horrific crime.

Police chief Pablo Rocha said: "This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire."

"All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we have."

Edwin's sister Alicia, writing on social media sites after his funeral, said in a message to friends and relatives: "Don't be sad. I know it hurts that he's no longer with us. He's my brother and we are his

family and it hurts us more than anyone.

use this

"But we have something that comforts us. He always had words for us when we felt down, words of encouragement.

"I know as his sister that he wouldn't have wanted us to be sad about his departure."

Staff at the cafe where he worked, Cafe 340 in Chihuahua, placed a black ribbon on the facade as a mark of respect.

One said: "He was an honest person who always tried to keep out of trouble. His interest in vampires was a hobby and nothing more."

A local paper identified Iveth Lopez, the brunette arrested over Edwin's murder, as a Facebook user who used the fake name Eleonor Malina and described herself as a trainee police officer.

The teenager used to use as her cover photo a heart with the message 'In a relationship with Satan' and published a series of satanic photos including several relating to the Nazis.

Her current cover photo is a disturbing modified version of Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper painting with the twelve disciples covered in blood and a satanic-like figure in Jesus' place standing over his corpse laid out on the table.

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CAUGHT ON VIDEO: Armed, Rum-Guzzling Monkey In Rooftop Standoff

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

This monkey was tame... until it picked up a knife.

02/19/2016 03:15 am ET

- Ed Mazza Overnight Editor, The Huffington Post

Don't mess with this monkey.

A rum-drinking primate grabbed a butcher's knife and hopped onto the roof of a makeshift bar in Patos, Brazil, where it stabbed at the tiles and then waved the blade over the edge -- essentially, giving the folks below some very strong "BACK OFF" vibes.

People can be heard hollering and laughing at the monkey as it brandishes the knife in an incident filmed earlier this month.

"It was a bar staff oversight that ended with the monkey drinking some rum and taking the knife," Lt. Col Saul Laurentino of the local fire department told the aRede news website.

He said the monkey had apparently been tamed, perhaps after many visits to the pub. Or rather, the monkey WAS tame... until it was armed.

"After the knife he wanted no man around," he said.

UPI reports that firefighters managed to disarm the monkey and release him into the woods, but he quickly went to another home and began acting aggressively and had to be captured again.

Local officials are deciding if he can be released into the wild again or sent into captivity.

Maybe he just needs a rehab program.

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Why Krakatoa Became Worldwide News

about.com

Krakatoa Volcano Eruption in 1883 Was a Worldwide Weather and Media Event

News Carried by Telegraph Cables Hit the Newspapers Within Hours

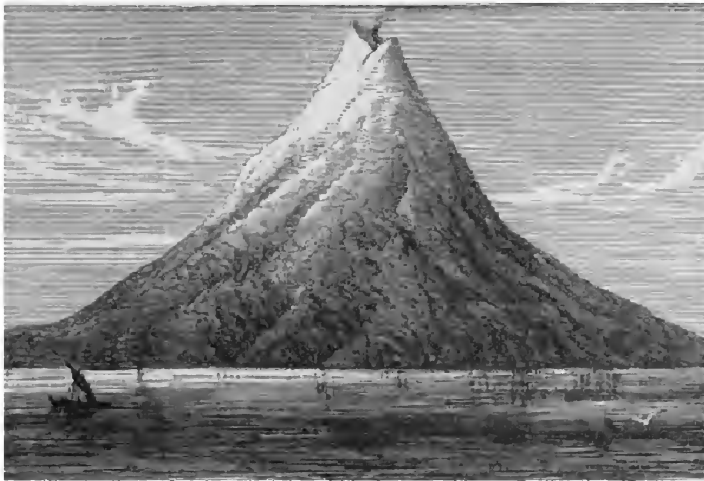


Illustration of volcanic island Krakatoa - Kean Collection/Getty Images

The volcanic island of Krakatoa before it blew apart. Kean Collection/Getty Images

By Robert McNamara

Updated December 04, 2014.

The eruption of the volcano at Krakatoa in the western Pacific Ocean in August 1883 was a major disaster by any measure. The entire island of Krakatoa was simply blown apart, and the resulting tsunami killed tens of thousands of people on other islands in

the vicinity.

The volcanic dust thrown into the atmosphere affected the weather around the world, and people as far away as Britain and the United States began to see bizarre red sunsets caused by particles in the atmosphere.

The events at Krakatoa were also significant because it was one of the first times that detailed descriptions of a colossal news event traveled around the world quickly, carried by undersea telegraph wires. Readers of daily newspapers in Europe and North America were able to follow current reports of the disaster and its enormous implications.

The Volcano at Krakatoa

The great volcano on the island of Krakatoa (sometimes spelled as Krakatau or Krakatowa) loomed over the Sunda Strait, between the islands of Java and Sumatra in present day Indonesia.

Before the 1883 eruption, the volcanic mountain reached a height of approximately 2,600 feet above sea level. The slopes of the mountain were covered with green vegetation, and it was a notable landmark to sailors passing through the straits.

In the years preceding the massive eruption several earthquakes occurred in the area. And in June 1883 small volcanic eruptions began to rumble across the island. Throughout the summer the volcanic activity increased, and tides at islands in the area began to be affected.

The activity kept accelerating, and finally, on August 27, 1883, four massive eruptions came from the volcano.

Steamboats

Experimental steamboats existed in the late 1700s, but it wasn't until American Robert Fulton outfitted a boat with an imported British engine that the practicality of them was shown. Fulton's boat, The Clermont, traveled along the Hudson River from New York City to Albany and back in August 1807.

The trip of the Clermont showed that steamboats could be made reliable. And within a few years the waters around New York City, as well as in other locations, were filling with steamboats. Entrepreneurs, including Cornelius Vanderbilt, began building great fortunes by operating fleets of steamboats.

After the introduction of steamships that could cross oceans, the great British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel took to designing and building ships. His three great steamships revolutionized the technology of crossing the ocean, and one of his ships, the Great Eastern, later made possible the laying of the transatlantic telegraph cable.

Railroads

For a time it seemed that canals, including New York's Erie Canal, would be the backbone of transportation in the 19th century. But then the steam engine was successfully adapted to land transportation by innovators such as Peter Cooper

Throughout the 1830s and 1840s railroads slowly spread through the United States, and by the time of the Civil War it was obvious that rail travel would be the dominant form of transportation of the century.

Photography

After years of experiments, French inventor Louis Daguerre invented a process which could preserve an image. The 1839 announcement of the Daguerreotype created a revolution.

continue reading below our video

10 Facts About the Titanic That You Don't Know

The complicated process was eventually replaced by the wet-plate collodion method, which was used to take photographs during the Civil War.

Telegraph

Until a practical working telegraph was introduced in the 1840s, news could only travel as quickly as someone could carry it. The idea of suddenly being able to know what was happening in distant places changed life in profound ways. In 1844 a man nominated as vice president at a national political convention received the news via telegraph and simply didn't believe it.

But within a few years, telegraphic news was commonplace in newspapers.

During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln used the telegraph to send orders to his generals. In the years following the war the transatlantic cable made the transmission of distant news a reality. In 1883 the eruption of Krakatoa was on newsstands in London and New York within hours of news being telegraphed from an outpost in the western Pacific.

Suspension Bridges

When the 19th century began, ferries were the normal way of crossing rivers. Bridge spans had definite limits, but that changed with the introduction of the suspension bridge.

By the mid-1800s geniuses like John Roebling were building bridges that let steam locomotives chug high across the Niagara River. And Roebling's son would see to the completion of his father's masterpiece, the Brooklyn Bridge.

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The final colossal explosion destroyed two-thirds of the island of Krakatoa, essentially blasting it into dust. Powerful tsunamis were triggered by the force.

The scale of the volcanic eruption was enormous. Not only was the island of Krakatoa shattered, other small islands were created. And the map of the Sunda Strait was changed forever.

Local Effects of the Krakatoa Eruption

Sailors on ships in nearby sea lanes reported astounding events associated with the volcanic eruption.

The sound was loud enough to break the eardrums of some crewmen on ships many miles away. And pumice, or chunks of solidified lava, rained from the sky, pelting the ocean and the decks of ships.

The tsunamis set off by the volcanic eruption rose as high as 120 feet, and slammed into the coastlines of the inhabited islands of Java and Sumatra. Entire settlements were wiped away, and it is estimated that 36,000 people died.

Distant Effects of the Krakatoa Eruption

The sound of the massive volcanic eruption traveled enormous distances across the ocean. At the British outpost on Diego Garcia, an island in the Indian Ocean more than 2,000 miles from Krakatoa, the sound was clearly heard.

People in Australia also reported hearing the explosion. It is possible that Krakatoa created one of the loudest sounds ever generated on earth, rivaled only by the volcanic eruption of Mount Tambora in 1815.

Pieces of pumice were light enough to float, and weeks after the eruption large pieces began drifting in with the tides along the coast of Madagascar, an island off the east coast of Africa. Some of the large pieces of volcanic rock had animal and human skeletons embedded in them. They were grisly relics of Krakatoa.

The Krakatoa Eruption Became a Worldwide Media Event

Something that made Krakatoa different from other major events in the 19th century was the introduction of the transoceanic telegraph cables.

The news of Lincoln's assassination less than 20 years earlier had taken nearly two weeks to reach Europe, as it had to be carried by ship. But when Krakatoa erupted, a telegraph station at Batavia (present day Jakarta, Indonesia) was able to send the news to Singapore. Dispatches were relayed quickly, and within hours newspaper readers in London, Paris, Boston, and New York were beginning to be informed of the colossal events in the distant Sunda Straits.

The New York Times ran a small item on the front page of August 28, 1883 — carrying a

dateline from the day before — relaying the first reports tapped out on the telegraph key in Batavia:

“Terrific detonations were heard yesterday evening from the volcanic island of Krakatoa. They were audible at Soerkrata, on the island of Java. The ashes from the volcano fell as far as Cheribon, and the flashes proceeding from it were visible in Batavia.”

The initial New York Times item also noted that stones were falling from the sky, and that communication with the town of Anjier “is stopped and it is feared there has been a calamity there.” (Two days later the New York Times would report that the European settlement of Anjiers had been “swept away” by a tidal wave.)

The public became fascinated with the news reports about the volcanic eruption. Part of that was due to the novelty of being able to receive such distant news so quickly. But it was also because the event was so enormous and so rare.

The Eruption at Krakatoa Became a Worldwide Event

Following the eruption of the volcano, the area near Krakatoa was enveloped in a strange darkness, as dust and particles blasted into the atmosphere blocked sunlight. And as winds in the upper atmosphere carried the dust great distances, people on the other side of the world began to notice the effect.

According to a report in the Atlantic Monthly magazine published in 1884, some sea captains had reported seeing sunrises that were green, with the sun remaining green throughout the day. And sunsets around the world turned a vivid red in the months following the Krakatoa eruption. The vividness of the sunsets continued for nearly three years.

American newspaper articles in late 1883 and early 1884 speculated on the cause of the widespread phenomenon of “blood red” sunsets. But scientists today know that dust from Krakatoa blown into the high atmosphere was the cause.

The Krakatoa eruption, massive as it was, was actually not the largest volcanic eruption of the 19th century. That distinction would belong to the eruption of Mount Tambora in April 1815.

The Mount Tambora eruption, as it happened before the invention of the telegraph, was not as widely known. But it actually had a more devastating impact as it contributed to bizarre and deadly weather the following year, which became known as The Year Without a Summer.

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Mount Tambora Was the Largest Volcanic Eruption of 19th Century

Cataclysm Contributed to 1816 Being “The Year Without a Summer”
Sir Thomas Raffles, who collected accounts of the Mount Tambora disaster.



Sir Thomas Raffles, who collected accounts of the Mount Tambora disaster - Getty Images

By Robert McNamara

By Robert McNamara

Updated December 04, 2014.

The tremendous eruption of Mount Tambora in April 1815 was the most powerful volcanic eruption of the 19th century.

The eruption and the tsunamis it triggered killed tens of thousands of people. And the magnitude of the explosion is difficult to fathom.

It has been estimated that Mount Tambora stood approximately 12,000 feet tall before the 1815 eruption, before the top one-third of the mountain was completely obliterated.

Adding to the disaster's massive scale, the huge amount of dust blasted into the upper atmosphere by the Tambora eruption contributed to a bizarre and highly destructive weather event the following year. And 1816 became known as The Year Without a Summer.

The disaster on the remote island of Sumbawa in the Indian Ocean has been overshadowed by the eruption of the volcano at Krakatoa decades later, partly because the news of Krakatoa traveled quickly via telegraph.

Accounts of the Tambora eruption were considerably more rare, yet some vivid ones do exist.

An administrator of the East India Company, Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles, who was serving as governor of Java at the time, published a striking account of the disaster based on written reports he had collected from English traders and military personnel.

Beginnings of the Mount Tambora Disaster

The island of Sumbawa, home to Mount Tambora, is located in present day Indonesia. When the island was first discovered by Europeans the mountain was thought to be an extinct volcano.

However, about three years before the 1815 eruption the mountain seemed to come to life. Rumbblings were felt. And a dark smoky cloud appeared atop the summit.

On April 5, 1815, the volcano began to erupt. British traders and explorers in that part of the world heard the sound and at first thought it to be the firing of cannon. There was a fear that a battle of at sea was being fought nearby.

The Massive Eruption of Mount Tambora

On the evening of April 10, 1815, the eruptions intensified. And a massive major eruption began to blow the volcano apart. Viewed from a settlement about 15 miles to the east, it

seemed that three columns of flames shot into the sky.

According to a witness on an island about 10 miles to the south, the entire mountain appeared to turn into "liquid fire." Stones of pumice more than six inches in diameter began to rain down on neighboring islands.

Violent winds propelled by the eruptions struck settlements like hurricanes, and some reports claimed that the wind and sound triggered small earthquakes. And tsunamis emanating from the island of Tambora destroyed settlements on other islands, killing tens of thousands of people.

Investigations by modern day archaeologists have determined that an island culture on the island of Sumbawa was completely wiped out by the Mount Tambora eruption.

Written Reports of Mount Tambora's Eruption

As the eruption of Mount Tambora occurred before communication by telegraph, accounts of the cataclysm were slow to reach Europe and North America.

The British governor of Java, Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles, who was learning an enormous amount about the native inhabitants of the local islands while writing his 1817 book *History of Java*, collected accounts of the eruption.

Raffles began his account of the Mount Tambora eruption by noting the confusion about the source of the initial sounds:

The first explosions were heard on this Island in the evening of the 5th of April, they were noticed in every quarter, and continued at intervals until the following day. The noise was in the first instance almost universally attributed to distant cannon; so much so, that a detachment of troops were marched from Djocjocarta [a nearby province] in the expectation that a neighboring post was attacked. And along the coast boats were in two instances dispatched in quest of a supposed ship in distress.

After the initial explosion was heard, Raffles said it was supposed that the eruption was no greater than other volcanic eruptions in that region. But he noted that on the evening of April 10th extremely loud explosions were heard and large amounts of dust began to fall from the sky.

Other employees of the East India Company in the region were directed by Raffles to submit reports about the aftermath of the eruption. The accounts are chilling. One letter submitted to Raffles describes how, on the morning of April 12, 1815, no sunlight was visible at 9 a.m. on a nearby island. The sun had been entirely obscured by volcanic dust in the atmosphere.

A letter from an Englishman on the island of Sumanap described how, on the afternoon of April 11, 1815, "by four o'clock it was necessary to light candles." It remained dark until the next afternoon.

About two weeks after the eruption, a British officer sent to deliver rice to the island of Sumbawa made an inspection of the island. He reported seeing numerous corpses, and widespread destruction. Local inhabitants were becoming ill and many had already died of hunger.

A local ruler, the Rajah of Saugar, gave his account of the cataclysm to the British officer, Lieutenant Owen Phillips. He described three columns of flames arising from the mountain when it erupted on April 10, 1815.

Apparently describing the lava flow, the Rajah said the mountain started to appear "like a body of liquid fire, extending itself in every direction."

The Rajah also described the effect of the wind unleashed by the eruption:

Between nine and ten p.m. ashes began to fall, and soon after a violent whirlwind ensued, which blew down nearly every house in the village of Saugar, carrying the tops and light parts along with it.

In the part of Saugar adjoining [Mount Tambora] its effects were much more violent, tearing up by the roots the largest trees and carrying them into the air together with men, houses, cattle, and whatever else came within its influence. This will account for the immense number of floating trees seen at sea.

The sea rose nearly twelve feet higher than it had ever been known to be before, and completely spoiled the only small spots of rice lands in Saugar, sweeping away houses and every thing within its reach.

Worldwide Effects of the Mount Tambora Eruption

Though it would not be apparent for more than a century, the eruption of Mount Tambora contributed to one of the worst weather-related disasters of the 19th century. The following year, 1816, became known as The Year Without a Summer.

The dust particles blasted into the upper atmosphere from Mount Tambora were carried by air currents and spread across the world. By the fall of 1815 eerily colored sunsets were being observed in London, England. And the following year the weather patterns in Europe and North America changed drastically.

While the winter of 1815-1816 was fairly ordinary, the spring of 1816 turned odd. Temperatures did not rise as expected, and very cold temperatures persisted in some places well into the summer months.

Widespread crop failures caused hunger and even famine in some places. And thus the eruption of Mount Tambora may have caused widespread casualties on the opposite side of the world.

The Year Without a Summer Was a Bizarre Weather Disaster in 1816

A Volcanic Eruption Led to Crop Failures on Two Continents



Mount Tambora - Jialiang Gao/Wikimedia Commons/CC BY-SA 3.0

Mount Tambora. Jialiang Gao/Wikimedia Commons/CC BY-SA 3.0

By Robert McNamara

Updated November 27, 2014.

The Year Without a Summer, a peculiar 19th century disaster, played out during 1816 when weather in Europe and North America took a bizarre turn that resulted in widespread crop failures and even famine.

The weather in 1816 was unprecedented. Spring arrived but then everything seemed to turn backward, as cold temperatures returned. The sky seemed permanently overcast. The lack of sunlight became so severe that farmers lost their crops and food shortages were reported in Ireland, France, England, and the United States.

In Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, retired from the presidency and farming at Monticello, sustained crop failures that sent him further into debt. In Europe, the gloomy weather helped inspire the writing of a classic horror tale, *Frankenstein*.

It would be more than a century before anyone understood the reason for the peculiar weather disaster: the eruption of an enormous volcano on a remote island in the Indian Ocean a year earlier had thrown enormous amounts of volcanic ash into the upper atmosphere.

The dust from Mount Tambora, which had erupted in early April 1815, had shrouded the globe. And with sunlight blocked, 1816 did not have a normal summer.

Reports of Weather Problems Appeared in Newspapers

Mentions of odd weather began appearing in American newspapers in early June, such as the following dispatch from Trenton, New Jersey which appeared in the Boston Independent Chronicle on June 17, 1816:

On the night of 6th instant, after a cold day, Jack Frost paid another visit to this region of the country, and nipped the beans, cucumbers, and other tender plants. This surely is cold weather for summer.

This is a modal window.

On the 5th we had quite warm weather, and in the afternoon copious showers attended with lightning and thunder -- then followed high cold winds from the northwest, and back back again the above mentioned unwelcome visitor. On the

6th, 7th, and 8th June, fires were quite agreeable company in our habitations.

As the summer went on and the cold persisted, crops failed. What's important to note is that while 1816 wasn't the coldest year on record, the prolonged cold coincided with the growing season.

And that led to food shortages in Europe and in some communities in the United States.

Historians have noted that the westward migration in America accelerated following the very cold summer of 1816. It is believed that some farmers in New England, having struggled through a horrible growing season, made up their minds to venture to western territories.

The Bad Weather Inspired a Classic Story of Horror

In Ireland the summer of 1816 was much rainier than normal, and the potato crop failed. In other European countries wheat crops were dismal, leading to bread shortages.

In Switzerland, the damp and dismal summer of 1816 led to the creation of a significant literary work.

A group of writers, including Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and his future wife Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, challenged each other to write dark tales inspired by the gloomy and chilly weather.

During the miserable weather Mary Shelley wrote her classic novel *Frankenstein*.

Reports Looked Back at the Bizarre Weather of 1816

By the end of summer, it was apparent that something very strange had occurred. The Albany Advertiser, a newspaper in New York State, published a story on October 6, 1816 which related the peculiar season:

The weather during the past summer has been generally considered as very uncommon, not only in this country, but, as it would seem from newspaper accounts, in Europe also. Here it has been dry, and cold. We do not recollect the time when the drought has been so extensive, and general, not when there has been so cold a summer. There have been hard frosts in every summer month, a fact that we have never known before. It has also been cold and dry in some parts of Europe, and very wet in other places in that quarter of the world.

The Albany Advertiser went on to propose some theories about why the weather was so bizarre. The mention of sunspots is interesting, as sunspots had been seen by astronomers, and some people, to this day, wonder about what, if any effect, that may have had on the weird weather.

What's also fascinating is that the newspaper article from 1816 proposes that such events be studied so people can learn what is going on:

Many persons suppose that the seasons have not thoroughly recovered from the shock they experienced at the time of the total eclipse of the sun. Others seem disposed to charge the peculiarities of the season, the present year, upon the spots on the sun. If the dryness of the season has in any measure depended on the latter cause, it has not operated uniformly in different places -- the spots have been visible in Europe, as well as here, and yet in some parts of Europe, as we have already remarked, they have been drenched with rain.

Without undertaking to discuss, much less to decide, such a learned subject as this, we should be glad if proper pains were taken to ascertain, by regular journals of the weather from year to year, the state of the seasons in this country and Europe, as well as the general state of health in both quarters of the globe. We think the facts might be collected, and the comparison made, without much difficulty; and when once made, that it would be of great advantage to medical men, and medical science.

The Year Without a Summer would be long remembered. Newspapers in Connecticut decades later reported that old farmers in the state referred to 1816 as "eighteen hundred and starve to death."

As it happens, the Year Without a Summer would be studied well into the 20th century, and a fairly clear understanding would emerge.

The Eruption of Mount Tambora

When the volcano at Mount Tambora erupted it was a massive and terrifying event which killed tens of thousands of people. It was actually a larger volcanic eruption than the eruption at Krakatoa decades later.

The Krakatoa disaster has always overshadowed Mount Tambora for a simple reason: the news of Krakatoa traveled quickly by telegraph, and appeared in newspapers quickly. By comparison, people in Europe and North America only heard about Mount Tambora months later. And the event did not hold much meaning for them.

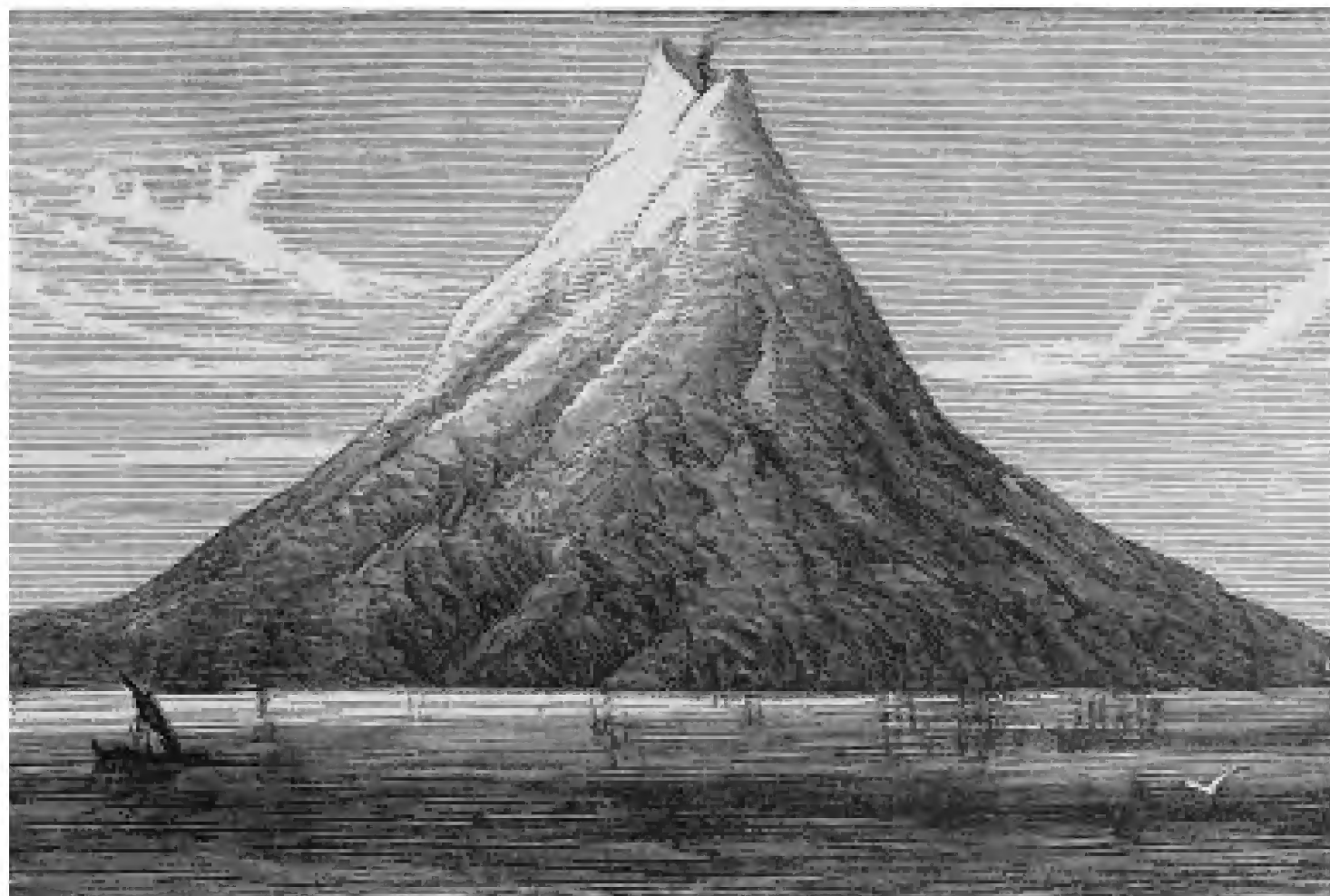
It was not until well into the 20th century that scientists began to link the two events, the eruption of Mount Tambora and the Year Without a Summer. There have been scientists who dispute or discount the relationship between the volcano and the crop failures on the other side of the world the following year, but most scientific thought finds the link credible.

Technology Milestones

By Robert McNamara

Updated August 30, 2015.

The 19th century was marked by astounding advances in technology. Here are some technology milestones everyone should know about:



22-2-2 - 7-13-22 - 2-2-22

1425

12-28



Last survivor of Nazi death camp Treblinka dies in Israel

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msn.com



FILE -- In this Oct. 31, 2010 file photo, Holocaust survivor Samuel Willenberg displays a map of Treblinka extermination camp during an interview with the Associated Press at his house in Tel Aviv, Israel. Willenberg, the last survivor of Treblinka, the Nazi death camp where 875,000 people were killed, has died, Friday, Feb. 19, 2016, at 93. Willenberg was among a group of Jews who in 1943 set fire to the camp and headed to the woods. Hundreds fled, but most were killed by Nazi troops in the surrounding mine fields or captured by Polish villagers.



Full
screen
1/3

FILE -- In this Oct. 31, 2010 file photo, Holocaust survivor Samuel Willenberg poses for a picture at his studio, during an interview with the Associated Press in Tel Aviv, Israel. Willenberg, the last survivor of Treblinka, the Nazi death camp where 875,000 people were killed, has died at 93. Willenberg was among a group of Jews who in 1943 set fire to the camp and headed to the woods. Hundreds fled, but most were killed by Nazi troops in the surrounding mine fields or captured by Polish villagers.



FILE -- In this Oct. 31, 2010 file photo, Holocaust survivor Samuel Willenberg poses for a picture at his studio, during an interview

SLIDES© AP Photo/Oded Balilty, File

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2/3 SLIDES© AP Photo/Oded Balilty, File

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3/3 SLIDES© AP Photo/Oded Balilty, File

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3/3 SLIDES

JERUSALEM — Samuel Willenberg, the last survivor of Treblinka, the Nazi death camp in occupied Poland where 875,000 people were systematically murdered, has died in Israel at the age of 93.

Only 67 people are known to have survived the camp, fleeing in a revolt shortly before it was destroyed.

Treblinka holds a notorious place in history as perhaps the most vivid example of the "Final Solution," the Nazi plan to exterminate Europe's Jews. Unlike at other camps, where some Jews were assigned to forced labor before being killed, nearly all Jews brought to Treblinka were immediately gassed to death.

Only a select few — mostly young, strong men like Willenberg, who was 20 at the time— were spared from immediate death and assigned to maintenance work instead at the camp, located northeast of Warsaw.

On Aug. 2, 1943, a group of Jews stole some weapons, set fire to the camp and headed to the woods. Hundreds fled, but most were shot and killed by Nazi troops in the surrounding mine fields or captured by Polish villagers who returned them to Treblinka.

"The world cannot forget Treblinka," Willenberg told The Associated Press in a 2010 interview.

He described how he was shot in the leg as he climbed over bodies piled at the barbed wire fence and catapulted over. He kept running, ignoring dead friends in his path. He said his blue eyes and "non-Jewish" look allowed him to survive in the countryside before arriving in

Warsaw and joining the Polish underground.

After the war Willenberg moved to Israel and became a surveyor for the Housing Ministry. Later in life, he took up sculpting to describe his experiences. His bronze statues depicted Jews standing on a train platform, a father removing his son's shoes before entering the gas chambers, a young girl having her head shaved, and prisoners removing bodies.

"I live two lives, one is here and now and the other is what happened there," Willenberg said. "It never leaves me. It stays in my head. It goes with me always."

His two sisters were killed at Treblinka. He described his survival as "chance, sheer chance."

The Nazis and their collaborators killed about 6 million Jews during the Holocaust. The death toll at Treblinka was second only to Auschwitz — a prison camp in southern Poland where more than a million people died in gas chambers or from starvation, disease and forced labor.

His daughter said he died on Friday. He is survived by a daughter and grandchildren.

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The Death of the Last Veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade

Karen Swallow Prior

theatlantic.com

Del Berg, 100, was one of the Americans who volunteered to fight Francisco Franco in the Spanish Civil War, and he never stopped fighting for leftist causes.



- David A. Graham
- Mar 4, 2016

Del Berg nearly died around 10 a.m. one sunny day in August 1939.

The 23-year-old American was staying at a monastery outside Valencia, Spain, when Italian bombers flew over and dropped their payload. The bombs were aimed for a nearby rail depot, but they hit the monastery instead. Berg, who was on the second floor, and the men he was

with frantically climbed downstairs on a pipe. Berg was last, and it was only when he'd gotten down he realized his shirt was soaked in blood. Shrapnel had struck his liver.

That piece of shrapnel was still in Berg's liver when he died—more than 76 years later, on Sunday at his home in California. He was 100.

Although the bombardment was not intended for Berg and his compatriots, the Italians wouldn't have shed any tears. Mussolini's air force was flying sorties in Iberia on behalf of General Francisco Franco, the Fascist fighting for control in the Spanish Civil War. Berg was there as a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, a group of idealistic, often far-leftist Americans who took up arms on behalf of the doomed Spanish Republic. He was believed to be the last surviving member of the brigades.

"I didn't know a damn thing politically. We were just kids. We wanted to do something to help the Spanish people."

Around 3,000 young men volunteered for the fight, slipping surreptitiously into Spain. About 800 of them were killed. The war ended in 1939, with Franco victorious. He would go on to lead a repressive dictatorship until his death in 1975. Some of the brigadiers who returned led fairly straightforward mid-century American lives, but not Berg. After returning to the United States in 1939, he was drafted by the U.S. Army and sent to New Guinea. Discharged in 1942 because of his wounds from Spain, Berg promptly joined the Communist Party USA, and led a life of activism throughout his life.

Berg was an old-school leftist—the type who came by his politics not from theory but from life. Born Delmer Berg in December 1915, his father was a tenant farmer. "I was born into a very poor farm family in Southern California," he told the *Anderson Valley Advertiser* in 2013. "We

lived near Modesto, and I became a radical early on in life."

A dishwasher with a union card, 21-year-old Berg was walking down a street in Hollywood when he saw a sign on the side of a building: "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade." He walked in and asked to go to Spain. They explained they couldn't directly send him, but they helped direct him. What followed was a circuitous process involving various offices, unmarked doors, and a dour, crippled World War I veteran. Eventually, Berg took a cross-country bus to New York, and then he and other volunteers took an ocean liner to Paris followed by a broken-down bus to near the Spanish border.

In Spain, Berg helped install communication lines for anti-aircraft batteries. The war is considered a test-run for the heavy bombardment of the Second World War, and it afforded Adolf Hitler and Mussolini a chance to try out tactics on behalf of Franco. The Soviet Union aided the Republicans. (The methods were still a little rough, which is one reason the monastery was struck: "'If you want to be safe,' we used to say, 'go to where the fascists want to bomb.'") Berg also fought in the Battle of the Ebro, the war's biggest battle.

He sometimes claimed political naïveté about the conflict—"I didn't know a damn thing politically. We were just kids. We wanted to do something to help the Spanish people"—but back in the states, Berg continued to espouse leftist and radical causes. He was vice president of his local NAACP chapter—at a time when he was reportedly the only white member. He worked with Dolores Huerta and the United Farm Workers. Later, he protested nuclear weapons and the Vietnam War.

During the McCarthyite 1950s, Berg said federal agents questioned his family and friends, but they didn't ever question him directly, which he attributed to the place he lived: a trailer between a Pentecostal church and a whorehouse on the wrong side of the tracks in Modesto. "They hesitated coming to the black community," Berg told *The Union Democrat* in 2007, but he did not.

In 1966, the House Un-American Activities Committee wanted to question him. "They could never find me to serve a summons," he boasted in 2012 to *The Volunteer*, an Abraham Lincoln Brigade veterans' paper. He said that the two proudest moments of his life were "when I was elected vice president of the local NAACP, and when one of my grandsons was valedictorian at his Oregon high school graduation and said in a newspaper interview, 'My grandfather is my inspiration. He's a Communist!'"

"It bothers me a little that at 99 you're going to die any minute, because I have a lot of other things I want to do."

Berg remained dogged in his political pursuits up until the end of his life. In 2007, he told *The Union Democrat* that his hearing was making it hard for him to go to meetings and speak out on the topics he cared about—including fighting for national health care and against the privatization of Social Security—but that he had to keep it up: "Sometimes, if I don't do it, no one else will."

In 2014, a reporter for *People's World*, the digital offspring of the old Communist paper the

Daily Worker, visited Berg at his self-built home. The 98-year-old demanded to hear what had happened at the last AFL-CIO convention. In an interview with *The New York Times* last year, he lamented his unfinished work. "It bothers me a little that at 99 you're going to die any minute, because I have a lot of other things I want to do," he said.

Yet it's hard to imagine many people getting quite so much out of life as Berg did in his century. And with his passing marking the end of the survivors of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, it's a little harder to imagine the horror of the Spanish Civil War.

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A Lawyer Defending A 17-Year-Old Black Kid Gets Real About Racial Injustice

fusion.net

This 43-tweet story explains how black kids are treated by America's criminal justice system

by Patrick Hogan | February 23, 2016 11:29 a.m.
February 23, 2016 11:29 a.m.

T. Greg Doucette is a criminal defense lawyer in North Carolina who also writes a legal blog. And he's got some things to say:

In a 43-part tweetstorm on Tuesday, Doucette recounted a recent experience defending a 17-year-old black teen from claims by a police officer that the teen was doing 360s in the middle of the street. Over the course of the story, Doucette demonstrates many of the problems black people face in the U.S. court system and why changes never seem to stick.

We'll let him take it from here.



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

1. I get asked -- often -- if I hate police



6



5

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.11 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

2. I don't; I look at "police" generally like I look at teachers generally



5



3

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.18 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

3. When a teacher decides to rape a student, we don't demonize all teachers. Same w/ teachers who are woefully inept at teaching.



6



8

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.23 PM

Yahoo! - ABC News Network

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T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

4. But, at the same time, no sane person denies there are teacher-rapists and teachers who suck at their job



4



5

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.29 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

5. I view police the same; I'm willing to take a leap of faith and assume you're competent, until you prove otherwise



9



6

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.34 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

6. Soooooo that brings me to court today



5



3

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.37 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

7. Client is a 17yo black male, "YBM" in defense lawyer parlance



5



4

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.43 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

8. My YBM client is charged with reckless driving to endanger, a very serious. He's terrified. Cried in my office explaining situation



5



4

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.48 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

9. Insisted he was just trying to avoid an animal that darted into the road, and swerved to the right



5



3

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.53 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

10. I pull the shuck, and read the officer's narrative of what happened:

"Neighbor saw driver doing donuts in street, nearly hit wife."...



7



5



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.48.58 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

11. Cont'd: "Skid marks show clear 360° circles. Driver claimed he was trying to avoid hitting cat."



7



3



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.05 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

12. Re-read that:

"clear

360°

circles"



5



4



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.10 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

13. Thankfully (how f*cking sad is it that "thankfully" is the appropriate word here?) his mom didn't trust the officer, and took pics



6



8



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.16 PM

**T. Greg Doucette** @greg_doucette · 2h

14. Which she kept, and sent to me



4



4

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.55.23 PM

**T. Greg Doucette** @greg_doucette · 2h

15. (Most of which were useless. Ppl take pictures of a lot of useless sh*t when they're terrified btw.)



4



8

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.33 PM

**T. Greg Doucette** @greg_doucette · 2h

16. The money shot:



21



Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.37 PM

**T. Greg Doucette** @greg_doucette · 2h

17. Now go back and re-re-read:

"clear

360°

circles"



4



9

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.45 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 2h

18. What. The actual. F*ck.



3



11



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.50 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 1h

19. Do I hate police? No. I hate raging incompetent cowboys w/ badges financed by my tax money who clearly haven't had an eye exam recently



14



47



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.49.55 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 1h

20. (/ ° □ °) / — — — — —



6



15



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.01 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 54m

21. The DA was kind enough to dismiss the case without putting up a fight.



5



9



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.06 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 51m

22. My YBM client's family is out what they paid me. Client himself is traumatized. And basis for police mistrust gets a fresh exhibit.



9



18



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.14 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 50m

23. While the officer who (wrongfully) charged him — and pretty clearly lied on official court documents — will face -0-repercussions.



19



25

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.22 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 48m

24. This is what police brutality looks like. It's not just people having their rights violated and the sh*t kicked out of them.



21



36

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.27 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 47m

25. It's an innocent 17yo black kid trying to be a good human being and not running over a cat getting thrown headlong into our court system



12



26

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.33 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 46m

26. It's having to come up with money you don't have, to defend yourself against charges that shouldn't have been filed



9



17

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.38 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 45m

27. And recognizing that — but for photographs that someone had the foresight to take immediately — you'd have been convicted



12



13

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.44 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 45m

28. Based solely on the word of a law enforcement officer who swore an oath to serve and protect who then lied to the court with impunity



16



23

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.49 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 38m

29. The State doesn't care of course. For every one case dismissed, hundreds more plead guilty. Court costs are \$188+ apiece



8



9

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.50.55 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 37m

30. A day's worth of traffic cases can finance an ADA's salary for a year. Likewise for a clerk or a judge.



7



8

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.01 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 36m

31. Guess what that means for legislators? They can cut preexisting court funding and put it somewhere where it'll buy them more votes



5



4

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.06 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 34m

32. So you've got a court system that ends up somehow being underfunded despite charging a sh*tload of money for minor offenses...



5



5

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.11 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 33m

33. Police routing more and more people (predominantly young and black) into the court system, patting themselves on the back



5



4

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.16 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 33m

34. (For protecting us from eeeeeevil 17yo YBMs trying not to hit cats while driving)



6



6

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.22 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 32m

35. While the politicians fiddle as their constituents burn, because people naively assume things like this would never happen



5



6

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.26 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 31m

36. Welcome to the clusterf*ck that is our criminal justice system. I filed to run for the State Senate precisely b/c of this bullsh*t.



6



9

[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.31 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 31m

37. It doesn't matter if you put an R or a D or a U beside your name — this is wrong.



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.36 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 29m

38. Sorry for taking up your TL. For reasons I don't understand, I'm *still* in disbelief that this sh*t *still* happens, when I know better



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.49 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 27m

39. I'm now going to clog my arteries with Bojangles in the hope/prayer that I won't still be flamingly pissed after lunch.



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.55 PM



T. Greg Doucette @greg_doucette · 26m

40. "clear 360° circles" 😂

(° ° °) / ———



[View conversation](#)

Screen Shot 2016-02-23 at 1.51.58 PM

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100 years ago, Leap Day encouraged women to propose to men. It still hasn't caught on.

By Lisa Bonos

February 29 at 12:30 PM

washingtonpost.com

The Washington Post 100 years ago, Leap Day encouraged women to propose to men. It still hasn't caught on.



(Nash Co. via Monmouth University)

originated in Irish or Scottish folklore. By 1908, there were Leap Year postcards like the ones pictured here, portraying husband-hunting women as threatening, masculine and violent. The men, on the other hand, look scared, small and emasculated.

It's Feb. 29, a day that comes around only once every four years. In the early 20th century, Leap Year meant more than an additional day on the calendar: It became a chance for women to propose marriage to men — at any point during the year, not just on Feb. 29.

The tradition's roots are uncertain, though historian Katherine Parkin of Monmouth University says it may have



(Nash Co. via Monmouth University)

“The images clearly convey the ugliness and desperateness of these women,” says Parkin, who maintains a database of Leap Year postcards from 1904 to 1920.

Leap Year had the potential to disrupt traditional gender roles, Parkin says, but instead had the effect of entrenching them. The postcards, she notes, use humor and shame to ridicule women who might dare to take control of their romantic fates.

She's found some evidence, she says, of women proposing marriage to men in the early 1900s. But the tradition never took off.

“Instead of transforming it into an accepted practice, the popular culture mocked and belittled women's proposals,” Parkin wrote in a 2011 article on Leap Year marriage proposals. “Scorned and ridiculed for trespassing against male privilege, along with those

who wore pants or participated in politics, female proposers learned that seeking rights threatened those who held power. In the end, the leap year custom helped ensure that men continued to hold the power in matters of matrimony.”

A century later, Parkin doesn't think much has changed. There's still “a real suspicion” of women who propose marriage to men, she said in a phone interview, adding that she thinks marriage proposals have become more traditional, not less. In another example of traditionalism, the proportion of grooms asking their in-laws for permission to marry has increased in recent years. And we're still uncomfortable with women earning more than their partners, Parkin notes. The discomfort with women-initiated proposals could be part of that, since the proposal is a way of saying: *I will provide for you.*

In 38 percent of heterosexual marriages, the woman makes more than the man. Until we get used to that economic dynamic, our ideas of romantic proposals might remain stuck in the past.

In the meantime, we have celebrity proposals such as Pink's and Jennifer Hudson's to remind us that a woman need not wait for a man to get down on bended knee.



(Nash Co. via Monmouth University)

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Little Bighorn Battlefield's Haunted Past: Paranormal Phenomenon

decodedpast.com

Little Bighorn Battlefield's Haunted Past: Paranormal Phenomenon Reported

April 4, 2014 by Jill Stefko [Leave a Comment](#)



Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. Image courtesy of the National Park Service.

The Sioux Nation's Hunkpapa Lakota, Sans Arc, Oglala Lakota, Miniconjoux and Blackfoot tribes as well as allied Cheyenne tribes fought against Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's 7th Cavalry by Montana's Little Bighorn River on June 25, 1876.

Most Native American warriors survived.

According to reports, Little Bighorn's paranormal phenomena include ghosts, poltergeist activity and electronic voice phenomena (EVP).

Custer's Last Stand

According to Dee Brown's *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee* and History's "*Battle of Little Bighorn*," tensions between the Native Americans and federal troops escalated with the discovery of gold on tribal lands. On June 25th, Custer's 600 troops entered Montana's Little Bighorn Valley although over 300 did not participate in the battle itself.

Word came to the tribes about an imminent attack, so Sitting Bull gathered his warriors and ensured the women's and children's safety while Crazy Horse left with a large force to meet the assailants. Custer tried to reorganize his men, but they were quickly defeated.

In addition to Custer, over 260 troops and other Army personnel died at Little Bighorn. Historians believe that the only US Cavalry survivor was Captain Keogh's horse, Comanche.

Hauntings on Battlefields

According to paranormal terminology, the phenomena, such as phantoms, and EVPs reported at Little Bighorn are '*residual hauntings*,' ones that witnesses see, hear, smell, taste, feel by touch and/or sense. In spite of these attributes, the residual hauntings have no intelligence, because they're energy imprinted on time and space. Experts theorize that traumatic experiences and violent deaths cause the phenomena.

Park Ranger Sights Phantom Warriors and Horses

According to Norman and Scott, in their unpublished "*Interview with Mardell Plainfeather, April 6, 1990*," Mardell Plainfeather, who was a park ranger at the time, had a sweat lodge near the Little Bighorn battlefield. She gave an elderly man permission to use her lodge, and after he finished his rites, he asked Mardell to make sure the fire was out.

Mardell and her young daughter, Lorena, went to the lodge, poured water on the stones, then went outside. Mardell then saw two warriors and their steeds on a bluff, about seventy feet away, in the bright moonlight. When she checked for evidence that they were there on the next day, however, she found none.

Little Big Horn's Electronic Voice Phenomena

According to Rosemary Ellen Guiley's *The Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits*, electronic voice phenomena (EVP) occurs when tape recorders capture an unexplained voice or voices. Deciphering EVPs is often time-consuming and tedious because the words usually aren't clear and are often whispered. Most recordings last under a minute.

Paranormalists have recorded EVPs on the site of Custer's Last Stand. They feature the original recording and slower versions. There are chantings and the voices of women, men, and children on tape recorded at the battlefield.

Haunted Little Bighorn Battlefield

The traumatic events and multiple violent deaths at Little Bighorn make it an ideal location for unusual paranormal phenomena, giving parapsychologists fertile ground on which to study and research.

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Jill Stefko holds a PhD in Counseling, a Master's degree in Metaphysics, and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, with extensive study in color symbolism. The theme of her PhD thesis was the ... [Read More about This Expert](#)

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Saturday, February 13, 2016

Little Conestoga Creek.



The discovery of the murdered body of Mrs. Mary Dellinger led to the very public airing of her family's dirty laundry. Calvin Dellinger was a philanderer, an abusive husband, and a sadistic father, but was he a killer as well?

Date: October 4, 1888

Location: Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Victim: Mary C. Dellinger

Cause of Death: Drowning

Accused: Calvin M. Dellinger

Synopsis:



A team of railroad men heading to work on a handcar on Friday, October 5, 1888 spotted something strange under a bridge across Little Conestoga Creek, near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. One of the men climbed down the steep bank for a closer look and found the body of a young woman. Her clothing was torn and her hair disheveled, and the ground around her showed signs of a struggle. Strewn around the body were a white straw hat trimmed with ribbon and bunting, a brown ladies handkerchief, seven buttons torn from her jersey, and a horseshoe shaped breast pin.

The woman was just over five feet tall, with a slender but shapely form. The upper portion of her clothing was wet while the lower was dry, suggesting that someone had held her head under the water. She was found on land farmed by John Gamber, and he took her body by wagon the dead house of the County Hospital. An examination of the body revealed that she had drowned.

Inside the hat found at the scene was written the name C. M. Dellinger. From this, the body was identified as Mary Dellinger, the 18-year-old wife of Calvin M. Dellinger, a tenant farmer. They lived on Fruitville Pike with their 13-month-old daughter. When he heard the news, Mr. Dellinger hurried to the County Hospital and wept bitterly over his wife's body.

Dellinger explained to the police that he had not seen his wife since Tuesday when she left

the house to go shopping and did not return. She was still missing on Thursday, and Dellinger went into Lancaster to see if she was at the home of her father, Isaac Aston. Aston told him that Mary had stayed there Wednesday night, but had returned home that morning. Dellinger went back home only to find that Mary had been home, taken some clothing for the baby and her watch, and left again. Once more Dellinger went into Lancaster and searched for his wife, unsuccessfully, until 11:00 Thursday night. Mary was reportedly seen Thursday evening in the company of an unknown man.

When the friends and family of Mary Dellinger were questioned, the police learned that there was more to the story of her disappearance. Calvin Dellinger was a serious wife beater who took any opportunity to abuse his Mary. He also tortured their baby; he hit her when she cried, would press the hot chimney of an oil lamp against the baby's face, and once held out a hot poker for her to grab. When his wife tried to interfere, he would turn his wrath on her. Mary could not take it anymore and on Tuesday, October 2, she decided to leave her husband.

She told him she was going to the grocery store, but went instead to her brother's house in Conestoga Centre. She stayed there Tuesday night, then on Wednesday he took her to her father's house in Lancaster. On Thursday she stopped at the home of a friend, then went back home. She entered the house by forcing open the shutters, then gathered up some baby clothes and other small items. As she was leaving, she saw her husband approaching and ran to a neighbor's house and hid there until he left again. She told her story at every stop, but it is not clear where she went from there or where the baby was during this time.



Mary Aston was not Calvin Dellinger's first wife. That marriage had ended in divorce the previous summer, just before he married Mary. The first Mrs. Dellinger was reluctant to speak of her husband, saying that her thoughts were now centered on her own family, but when she started talking she added another dimension to the story. She said their marriage had been happy until Dellinger met Mary Aston, then he became abusive and had

once threatened to shoot her. He met Mary at a Sunday school picnic and she had asked him to take her home, after that they would meet on the sly. His wife found some letters Mary had written to him, proposing that they run off and get married. She also found Mary's picture in Dellinger's hat. When she confronted her husband he said he loved Mary and was planning to marry her.

When Mary became pregnant and threatened to bring a paternity suit against him, Mrs. Dellinger divorced her husband. But Dellinger and Mary did not immediately get married, and in spite of the divorce he and his ex-wife were trying to settle their differences and live

together again. He told her that Mary had agreed to drop the suit if she was paid \$125. She gave Dellinger the money, thinking the matter was resolved, but three days later Dellinger married Mary Aston. He had used the money to buy a stage route between Lancaster and Conestoga.

The first Mrs. Dellinger referred to Mary Aston as a "loose character." After the marriage she met with Mary who told her that Dellinger was not the father of her child. The real father was a school teacher in Conestoga and she planned to run off with him as soon as she could make the arrangements.

Calvin Dellinger was rapidly becoming the prime suspect in Mary's murder. In his house, the police found a suit of clothes saturated with water, as well as several rings believed to have been taken off Mary's body. The breastpin found at the murder scene was known to have belonged to Mr. Dellinger. That evidence, together with Dellinger's history of abuse, led to his arrest for his wife's murder. But it could not be proven that Dellinger wore the pin the day of the murder and the footprints at the scene of the murder were not made by Dellinger's shoes. Though the police were convinced of Dellinger's guilt, he was released due to lack of evidence.

Upon his release, Dellinger announced that he was offering a \$200 reward for information leading to the arrest of his wife's killer. but most people in town still believed that Dellinger himself was guilty of the murder. Though it was reported that the police were no longer investigating, the county had brought in a Pinkerton detective named James Nevins to go over the evidence more thoroughly. It was not specified exactly what he found, but on November 7, Calvin Dellinger was re-arrested.

Trial: March 7, 1889

In addition to the somewhat thin circumstantial evidence against Dellinger, the prosecution questioned many friends and family members of Mary Dellinger, who testified to Calvin Dellinger's abuse of his wife and the animosity that existed between them. The testimony of Mary's father Isaac Aston, succinctly sums up the situation:

My daughter's eyes were blackened and she was bruised several times and Dellinger admitted that he had caused it; frequently when Dellinger had quarrels with his wife she was afraid to go with him and he said she had to go with him, that he feared neither hell, Heaven, or the gallows.

The most damning testimony concerning the murder came from Mrs. Susan Shrenk who had been riding home from work in a carriage the evening of October 4 and had passed Calvin Dellinger and his wife going down Fruitville pike and had heard them arguing. This contradicted Dellinger's story that he had not seen his wife after Tuesday and had been in Lancaster on October 4.

Dellinger's attorney reminded the jury that his client was charged with the murder of Mary Dellinger, not beating or abusing her. He raised the possibility that Mary had committed

suicide and he challenged Mrs. Shrenk's testimony because it was different from what she testified to at the inquest.

The jury deliberated for twenty-four hours before sending a note to the judge saying that they were hopelessly deadlocked at six for conviction and six for acquittal. The judge would not accept this and told them to continue deliberating until they all agreed. After another twenty-six hours they reached a compromise and found Dellinger guilty of second-degree murder.

Verdict: Guilty of second-degree murder

Aftermath:

The verdict came as a surprise the public who generally believed that Dellinger was either guilty of a capital crime or not guilty at all. He was sentenced to ten years at the Eastern Penitentiary.

Calvin Dellinger was released from prison in February 1897, after serving nearly eight years, and immediately got himself into trouble again. He was out less than a week before he went to his first wife seeking reconciliation. She refused to have anything to do with him and he was arrested for threatening to kill her.

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Posted by Robert Wilhelm

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Northeast Ohio's Haunted Places, Abandoned Cemeteries, Legends and other curiosities.

Lock 4: Ohio & Erie Canal

Posted on October 10, 2012 by camevil

(Orig. Published 7/2003)



We struggled with whether to place this site in the Haunted Places or Local Oddities/Urban Legends section (same difference?). The story is virtually the same—word-for-word—and no other version could be found to back it up, leading us to believe that it came from one

source and no other. But perhaps that's being too nitpicky, so we'll leave it up to others to judge. The tale surrounding this quaint little canal lock in Lawrence Township (just south of Canal Fulton in Stark County), goes as follows:

"Information is hard to find on this place but there is some out there and I have found it. Back when the canal started construction in 1857 many men worked on it complex structure. The man who was head of this operation caught wind of the government shutting down the Canal Fulton operation. He was angered and while working burned many of the workers and him self with acid. His hateful spirit still haunts the building and waterways of lock four along with many of the poor souls he killed. "

Of course, research has not confirmed the grisly, acid mass killing. But, is there any truth to this tale?

"For Every Mile of the Canal, an Irishman is Buried."

This is a popular expression associated with the Ohio & Erie Canal, and for good reason.



The canal diggers were mostly Irish immigrants. The work was grueling and dangerous. Hundreds of young men died from various microbes festering in the mud and stagnant water—malaria (or “Canal Fever”) and acute diarrhea.

Many were buried in shallow, unmarked graves along the canal, or in mass paupers graves at nearby cemeteries.

For over a 12-hour day of strenuous labor, the canal worker received a pittance in pay, tent or shanty housing, and meager meals (consisting mostly of coffee, bacon, beans, potatoes and, on every other day, maggot-ridden meat). Not surprisingly, there were several labor uprisings as a result.

In addition, many internal conflicts brewed among the workers that often turned violent, even fatal. This

may have been due to the “daily jigger of whiskey” allotted to the men as part of their compensation. Perhaps stereotypical of Irish immigrants—or perhaps not—local law enforcement officials attributed as much as 90% of homicides to drunken Irish perpetrators.

In light of this perception of the canal workers as expendable trouble-makers, it is logical to conclude that the “murders” as alleged in the story were either deliberately unreported, or were misreported to place blame for the deaths on an Irish immigrant.



Construction on the Ohio & Erie Canal began in 1825, and was completed in 1832—long before the date of 1857 as mentioned in the tale. Canal operations in Ohio reached its peak in 1851, but rapidly declined following the development of the railroad system. By 1857, many canals were in serious fiscal trouble. In the early 1860's, the government leased Lock 4 to a private contractor. However, the company failed to properly maintain and operate the canal, and stopped paying rent. The government took back the lock in the 1870's.

The Great Flood of 1913 was the final nail in the canal system's coffin. In addition to causing numerous deaths, many canals were destroyed by the flood, bringing about the end of the



Ohio canal system.

Lock 4 is now part of a park that is open during the summer until dusk. It is the only Ohio canal lock still "operational" in the sense that the restored mechanisms can conceivably work. Next to the lock is the old Lock Tender's Cabin, pictured below:



For more information, check out these websites, which were some resources for this article:

Irish Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland

Inland Navigation—Connecting the New Republic

Ohio and Erie Canal Corridor Coalition

CanalWay Ohio

The Ohio and Erie Canal: Catalyst of Economic Development for Ohio

History of the Ohio and Erie Canal

For other websites featuring the gruesome Lock 4 haunted tale, check out these links:

<http://www.ohioexploration.com/index.htm>

<http://www.ghosthuntersinc.com/haunted/ohio.htm>

<http://theshadowlands.net/places/ohio.htm>

READER SUBMISSION VAULT

submissionvault



skeleton7

9/11/05: Ted shares some strange photos

taken around the Lock Tender's cabin at Lock Four. Very, very interesting. Is it the apparition of a man or a mind trick caused by the foliage in the background? You decide.

Recently my girlfriend and I visited Lock 4 after reading about it on your website. We took some photos around the canal. One of the photos taken behind the cabin turned up a very odd discovery. It appears to be an apparition. The face is pretty clear with a body semi-visible. I've enclosed the picture with it circled, and also a cropped copy of just the apparition.



This entry was posted in Haunted Places, Local Folklore, Weird History and Oddities and tagged Canal, Canal Fulton, Haunted Places by camevil. Bookmark the permalink.

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DDLY HISTORICAL

Humans have always believed in monsters. Our ancient ancestors told tales of giants, dragons, and less classifiable things lurking in the impenetrable



Illustration of the London Monster attacking a woman. It was based on witness testimony, but produced before Williams was arrested.

darkness of the night. While the march of progress has shown these stories to be nothing more than collective nightmares, now and then real-life monsters rear their all too human heads. It turns out that the real monsters—with a few exceptions—take human form. From Delphine LaLaurie's attic of horrors to the castle of the Blood Countess, tales of human savagery litter the historical record. Even today we are not clear on what goes wrong in a person's mind to make them turn monstrous, although many have turned down dark pathways in an effort to figure out why. Some folks are just broken, and nobody can figure out how to fix them.

One such monstrous figure stalked the streets of London in 1790. Dozens of women reported being attacked by a boisterous, lewd man who slashed at their clothing and stabbed their buttocks with a dagger. Panic quickly spread through the city as citizens and police alike tried to track down the mysterious figure who came to be

dubbed "The London Monster."

The Monster's first strike

The Monster's first reported attack occurred January 19, 1790, on the Queen's birthday. The Porter sisters—Sarah and Anne—were on their way home to their fathers hotel after enjoying the festivities when a strange fellow approached. He stared intently at Sarah before saying "Oh ho! Is that you?" and hitting her on the back of the head. Confused by the unprovoked assault, she ran toward her sister and the chaperone—Mrs. Miel— escorting the pair. The group hurried toward the hotel, but the man was not following. He appeared again when they were pounding on the hotel door. He stabbed Anne on the hip. He then left while the frantic women tried to raise the attention of those inside, but soon returned. He stared at the women, a grin on his lips. John Porter, their brother, let the group inside. He was the first to see the blood on Anne's dress. He summoned servants to search for the attacker, but the mysterious assailant disappeared.

That night, four other women would reportedly be attacked by the strange grinning man. The Monster established his *modus operandi* that night. He approached pretty, well-dressed women, usually coming uncomfortably close. He spoke to them in a crude manner, making vulgar sexual comments and foul language. If they tried to walk away, he would pursue them,

often for a good distance. Then he would stab them in the hips or thighs using a sharp instrument before running away.

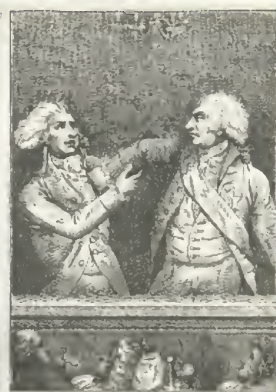
While this constituted most of the Monster attacks, the mysterious pervert slightly modified his approach in later cases. Some women reported being approached by a man who asked them to smell an artificial nosegay. When they did so, he stabbed them in the face with an object concealed within the flower before running away.

A phantom with many faces

As reports of attacks flooded in after the initial spate on January 19, many different descriptions of the alleged assailant were given by his victims. Mrs. Mary Smyth, who was attacked two years before the Porter sisters, making her the first victim of the Monster, claimed her attacker was a "villanous" looking man with a narrow face. Another woman reported the attacker was a small, thin, big nosed man. A little less than a year before the Porter sisters were attacked, Mrs. Sarah Godfrey was attacked by a man of medium build wearing a good black suit. Miss Mary Forster was accosted six months later by a slender man with regular features and a big nose. Still another victim described her attacker as a six foot tall man with pale skin and sallow features. Investigators—both the professionals and vigilantes who later took to the streets—believed the Monster was a rich man who used disguises to commit his crimes, thus accounting for the varying appearance.

It seemed the Monster could be anyone. Panic was growing on the streets of London. By early April 1790, the incidents had attracted the attention of a Lloyd's Insurance broker named John Julius Angerstein. He took it upon himself to interview victims. He found that there had been 30 attacks between May 1788 and April 1790. Eager to do his part to stop the scourge of the Monster, Angerstein and some associates pooled their money for a reward: 50 pounds for information that led to the arrest of the Monster, or for the capture of the Monster himself, and another 50 pounds if the culprit was convicted. The group plastered posters around the city advertising the reward. The already bewildered police were flooded with tipsters and men hauling in folks they thought were the culprit.

Captured(?)



BARRINGTON detected, paying the Stakes of PRINCE ORLOFF in the great Boxes at Covent Garden Theatre, of a Guiltless, yet with Innocence appeared to be worth £50,000
Engraved by the Rev. George H. & Co. by the Rev. John. Bar. 1790

The Monster hunters taking to the street in search of reward didn't seem to deter the London Monster, who continued to wage his campaign of terror against the female citizens of London. He began to prey on more homely ladies during that time. Panic grew into a flat out mania. Women were terrified to leave their homes, especially at night. Rich women began wearing copper cuirasses over their rear ends, while the less well off had to settle for girding their loins with copper cook pots. Men roved the streets, searching for the Monster and beating any man suspected of being the phantom assailant. Enterprising pick pockets took advantage of the hysterical climate. They would burgle an unsuspecting fellow, then denounce him as the Monster and run off while the mob descended. Others named their enemies the Monster and watched with satisfaction as the mob beat

Pickpocket caught in the act. Pickpockets took advantage of the panic to ply their trade.

the tar out of the unfortunate.

With hysteria in the packed London streets, police had to act fast before they had a full scale riot on their hands. They snapped up a Welsh artificial flower maker named Rhynewick Williams, arresting him on suspicion of being the Monster. He was an average looking fellow who wasn't very well educated. Four Monster victims could not identify him in the pre-trial hearing. In addition, his coworkers at the flower factory vouched for him, telling the judge that he was at work when the Porter sisters were attacked. No fewer than thirteen character witnesses came forward and vouched for Williams, telling the court he was a good man. Despite all this, Williams was found guilty on the testimony of the Porter sisters.

Strangely, Williams was not found guilty of assault. Cutting a person with intent to kill was considered a misdemeanor at the time, punishable by fines, prison time, or flogging. Prosecutors went for a felony charge—punishable by death or transportation to Australia—of cutting clothes. Yes, it turned out that in late 18th century London, cutting clothes was a worse crime than cutting flesh. The statute was instituted when weavers, who were angry over the import of cheap Indian fabrics, attacked anyone wearing clothes made from the foreign material. Under this statute, Williams was sentenced to 7 years transportation.

Theophilus Swift, relative of the great satirist and novelist Johnathon Swift, heard about the results of the charges and believed a great injustice had been done to Williams. He offered his assistance to the hapless Welshman, and managed to bluster his way to a second trial. During the trial, Swift contended that the Porter sister's were using the courts to get revenge on Williams. He had approached Anne, and become angry when she rejected him. He insulted her about a past indiscretion with a mysterious figure named Captain Crowder. Swift also alleged that Porter was angling to get the reward money, since she'd married the man who captured Williams and netted the reward money. Furthermore, Swift argued that there had been two more Monster-style attacks while Williams was in prison, so it couldn't have been his client who did the original crimes. In addition, women were coming forward claiming that they had faked their injuries in order to garner attention as victims of the Monster, casting suspicion on all of the victim's accounts by association.

These arguments—and the pamphlets Swift published which trumpeted them to the public at large—were enough to cast doubt on the proceedings of the first trial. The felony charge against Williams was dropped, and he was charged with the lesser misdemeanor of cutting with the intent to kill. He was sentenced to two years of prison time for each offense, totaling six years. Williams served out his sentence, married and fathered a children, and basically dropped out of the historical record at that point.

A monstrous delusion?

London was a rough and tumble city during the late 18th century. The population had swelled to about a million, and more people meant more of the problems that plagued any large city, especially crime. The odds of someone falling victim to the swarms of footpads, pickpockets, and other nasty sorts were pretty good. So it wasn't much of a leap for the city's residents to believe that a monstrous madman might be on the loose among them.

They certainly did believe it, but that doesn't mean that the London Monster actually did exist. What seems likely given the evidence—the varying descriptions of the attacker, the relatively minor wounds, the faking of wounds for attention, the fact that most victims were female—is that the London Monster was a type of mass sociogenic illness called a collective delusion. The term “delusion” in this sense does not mean that the victims were psychotic and hallucinating. In this usage, it simply means that a false belief spread through the population. There is no doubt that at least some of the women were actually victims of assault; it's inevitable, considering that so many crimes were being committed daily in the London streets. But these assaults came to be lumped together as the actions of one attacker, rather than the random acts of anonymous hoodlums. The London Monster put a face on the problems plaguing the city; crime, overcrowding, and the low status of women in British society at the time. By putting a face on abstract issues, it gave people a way that they could act on these unconscious stresses and anxieties. It wound up that poor Rhynewick Williams was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. He became a scape-goat, bearing the burdens of societal sin so that the larger community could believe justice had been done.

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This entry was posted in Criminals, Killers, and Scam Artists, Mysteries and Strange Occurrences and tagged collective delusion, crime, mass hysteria, phantom attackers, the London Monster, weird science on June 23, 2014 by Andrew Kincaid.

4 thoughts on “The London Monster”

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Long-lost Mozart score discovered in Czech museum

independent.co.uk

The discovery shows a professional relationship between two rival musical talents

- Jess Staufenberg
- Sunday 14 February 2016



The Austrian composer wrote to his father complaining that Salieri was everyone's favourite composer

A long-lost musical composition by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart has been discovered in a museum.

The collaborative effort, a libretto, between Antonio Salieri and Mozart was found tucked away in the reserve collection of the Czech national museum, according to The Local.

"It's a joint composition by Mozart and Salieri, a libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte put to music," Sarka Dockalova, the museum's spokeswoman, told AFP.

Salieri, a key figure in the development of late 18th-century opera, was described by Mozart in various letters as a "favourite" Italian composer of the Emperor of the time, Joseph II, and his rival in musical terms.

"It's a really valuable work [...] long thought to have been lost," said Ms Dockalova.

According to letters sent to his father, Mozart said "the only one who counts in [the Emperor's] eyes is Salieri."

Rumours circulated after Mozart's early death in 1791 that Salieri had poisoned the Austrian composer, which were further compounded by a 1984 film of his life, "Amadeus".

The discovery of a co-authored composition would appear to support the long-since dismissed theory that Salieri might have played a role in Mozart's death.

Alexander Pushkin's 19th century poetic drama "Mozart and Salieri" had also sought to dramatise the mysterious circumstances surrounding Mozart's death at the age of 35.

Comments

1 Comment

(edited) 1 day ago

Wolfgang1783

Mozart of Mozart's requiem was written prior to his final illness, which began in November 1791 and culminated in his death on 5 December 1791. If Da Ponte, who wrote the libretto for Mozart's last opera Magic Flute, was involved, then the work should date to 1790-1791

period. It does not prove Salieri murdered Mozart, but does prove theories once dismissed can come back to bite you. If I recall, Mozart scholars Stanley Sadie and Michael Lorenz both argued against this piece existing. Time to eat a piece of humble pie professors.

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Los Angeles Judge Turned into a Reptilian, Says Man - Cryptozoology News

cryptozoologynews.com


Posted on Mar 3 2016 - 1:50pm by Cryptozoology News

LOS ANGELES — A California man on Wednesday said he saw a judge “changing shape” in West Los Angeles.



reptilian humanoid los angeles california

The man, whose name was omitted for anonymity purposes, says he was attending a court proceeding for a traffic violation when he observed the judge turn into “a reptile”.

“I was standing about 10-15 feet from the Judge,” he explained. “He momentarily changed shape into a

reptilian, then changed back into a human form.”

The alleged event, which the man claims to have taken about 5 to 10 seconds, was reportedly not noticed by the other 15 people present in the court room, including officers and reporters.

The Los Angeles resident also maintains that his case was rescheduled.

“The next time I was to go in front of that Judge, she recused herself and would not see me again,” he added. “The Judge did not want to speak to me after this, but had the bailiff tell me to return at the next scheduled court date. I never saw the Judge again in my return visits to the court.”

The judge, he said, was dressed in a black robe and her face was the only body part he noticed to have changed shape.

“I did not see her hands at the event as they were on the desk and were blocked by the podium where I stood. No words were spoken during the shape change.”

The man says he is sure about what he saw and that he had only told two people about the incident.

“I saw what I saw. I will never forget it,” he said.

Some paranormal researchers believe in the existence of a race of snake-like underground

creatures. Proponents of the reptilian theory, such as David Icke, suggest a conspiracy involving these humanoids taking over planet Earth. According to its followers, these creatures are meticulously involved in daily political decisions affecting governments across the world, as they also believe that they are capable of “morphing” or “shapeshifting” at will in order to “deceive” the population.


In June 2015, a Texas man told Cryptozoology News that a reptilian humanoid had startled him when the alleged creature had entered his house in Brownsville.

A month earlier, a motorist in Florida took a photograph of what he called a being with “heavy eyelids” and “weird scaly protrusions” driving a vehicle in front of him.

In early 2015, a woman said that her Native American grandparents had encountered an unidentified reptile-like creature while crossing the Sabine River from Louisiana into Texas in 1920.

In 2002, a girl in Virginia claimed to have seen a similar creature while camping at the *Yogi Berra's Jellystone Park* in Page County. She stated that the animal looked like “the mix of a horse and a Komodo dragon” with a “dark gray-brown color”.

Recent Comments

- Steve: You all need a reality check, Friend of mine last night just...
- 
 - Wee Liam: If you go there - and I hope you do - and you don't find a d...
 - Wee Liam: LOL. Yeah. With the camera on the "call phone". They kn...
 - Wee Liam: You ever run across a cougar carcass? There's cougar out th...
- Fair Use 17 USC Section 107

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Mail carrier calls for help after wild turkeys surround truck

12min

wcvb.com

- **Postal worker wasn't injured by turkeys**

Published 12:02 AM EST Feb 17, 2016

HILLSDALE, N.J. —Authorities say a New Jersey letter carrier trapped inside his mail truck by a group of turkeys was rescued by two police officers.

- **Mailman faced with swarming turkey attacks daily**

A mail carrier called for help Tuesday after he said his truck was surrounded by wild turkeys -- and he couldn't get out.

A postmaster called Hillsdale police around noon to report that the letter carrier could not get out of his truck.

The responding officers soon managed to scare the turkeys away so the letter carrier could continue his route. But he did have to skip three homes due to the incident.

A statement from the U.S. Postal Service said the letter carrier was "attacked earlier today by a flock of turkeys" and it caused the interruption of mail delivery to three homes.

It's not the first time wild turkeys have targeted a mailman. **This video from Falmouth, Massachusetts** shows a letter carrier who had the turkeys follow him along his route.

Wild turkeys neared extinction a few decades ago but have made a comeback in recent years.

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Making sense of a murder: Daughter explores love triangle that shattered her family

Mon at 7:50pm Mon 7 Mar 2016, 7:50pm

abc.net.au

Joan Atherton Hooper is about to open the case files for her father's murder in 1939. The files have been closed for 75 years - most of Joan's life - but after being reopened to the public in January, she is finally able to challenge her own suspicions about the murder.

By 774 ABC Melbourne's Clare Rawlinson

Updated about 6 hours ago Tue 8 Mar 2016, 6:09pm



Infographic: Joan Atherton Hooper and daughter Karen McMullan view Alfred Atherton's murder case files at the Public Records Office of Victoria. (ABC Local: Clare Rawlinson)

Alfred Atherton was 35 when his wife's secret lover shot him dead in Ferntree Gully, in Melbourne's outer east. This much Joan knows from newspaper archives she has read.

But the circumstances around the murder are contested, and Joan has always had her own questions.

The biggest of all: was the killer acting alone, or was her mother behind the murder as part of a bid for freedom from her husband?

What Joan knows so far



Infographic: Alfred and Dorothy Atherton were married when Morris Ansell killed Mr Atherton. (Supplied)

The Atherton family was in disarray when Alfred was killed. Joan and her four older siblings had been sent to an orphanage because their father was not able to care for them while working full-time.

Their mother, Dorothy, had disappeared. It was not the first occasion, but this time she was staying with her young lover, 19-year-old Morris Ansell.

And she was pregnant with his child.

In 1939, women in Victoria did not have the right to divorce their husbands, so the only way for Ansell and Dorothy to be together was if Alfred granted Dorothy a divorce, and that was not on the cards.

So Ansell found another way to remove Alfred from the equation.

He approached Alfred promising he knew where Dorothy and the children were, and that he could take Alfred to meet them in Ferntree Gully.

"Because our father didn't know the part Morris Ansell played in our mother's life, he went with [Ansell] unwittingly to Ferntree Gully," Joan said.

After getting off the train together and walking a short distance down a dirt track, Ansell pulled a rifle out from under his coat and shot Alfred.

Ansell then went to call a taxi back to Melbourne, leaving Alfred to die in a pool of blood - his pockets filled with Christmas presents he had brought for his five children.

Meanwhile, Dorothy was at a cinema in Coburg with friends, and returned to bed with Ansell later that night.

"The lurid details made for great reading - every city and every main newspaper had it as their headlines," Joan said.

Dorothy's alibi cleared her of any direct link to the murder, but Joan and her daughter Karen remain curious as to what knowledge Dorothy had of Ansell's plans.

"What happened between her [Dorothy] and Ansell, we may never know," Karen said.

A death sentence and a disappearance

Gradually she took charge of
him and played on his
feelings and his vanity

Infographic: The Inspector General's scathing description of Dorothy Atherton. (Supplied)

After police traced the rifle back to Ansell and prosecuted him for Alfred's murder, he was sentenced to death.

A jury sought compassion for him because of his young age, and his sentence was transferred to life imprisonment.

Throughout the trial though, Dorothy's character was brought into question, with police describing her as a woman of low morality and "really a bad type of woman".

"Gradually she took charge of him and playing on his feelings and his vanity," the Inspector General wrote of Dorothy and Ansell.

After Ansell was imprisoned, Dorothy was not allowed to visit him in jail.

Six months pregnant, publicly shamed and having lost both her husband and her lover, she disappeared again, this time not to emerge until many decades later.

As Joan prepared to examine her father's case file in February, she explained her theory for her father's murder.

"My opinion is because of the age difference, and my mother's background, I actually feel a modicum of sympathy for Morris... he doesn't look like a murderer," she said.

Joan believed her mother used her age and prowess to manipulate the love-struck man, 12 years her junior.

"I blame my mother more [than Morris]," she said.

Looking for clues in a 75-year-old file



Photo: 19-year-old Morris Ansell.
(Supplied)

Public Records Office of Victoria archivist Jack Martin takes Joan and her daughter Karen to a room to view the murder file.

"The more I know about my mother's involvement, the more it'll be clearer to me what her side of the story is and what transpired exactly," Joan says.

"I'm expecting that I'll have a reaction but which reaction I don't know, because emotions are funny things."

Mr Martin offers Joan a thick manila folder with about 40 pages inside - psychologists reports, witness statements, police interviews and court transcripts.

He explains the files have been closed for 75 years because to protect the privacy of individuals involved in the case who may still be alive.

"After 75 years, when the case involves adults, most people will be very old or deceased by the time they're opened," he says.

After only a few minutes of reading, Joan stops, aghast.

"I'm just astounded at something I've just read," she says.

A Victoria Police report describing Ansell has caught her attention. Instead of painting a picture of the impressionable young man Joan had imagined, a darker character is observed.

"The prisoner has been a very wayward youth and apparently could not be controlled at home," the report reads.

"He first came under notice of police when he was 14 years old. He was then charged with larceny...convicted and placed on 12 months' probation."

The report goes on to describe a violent assault on an elderly woman, and signs of a violent temper and dangerous moods.

Joan sits back in shock.

"I saw this young man as being this guileless youth who fell under my mother's influence because she was 32 and he was 19," she says.

"I've always thought she was behind my father's murder."

On another page, a medical report describes Ansell in similarly disturbing terms.

It says Ansell was completely infatuated with Dorothy, perhaps partly because she was the first person he had been intimate with, according to his own admission.

"He admits that he wanted to marry her and that he resented her husband's 'dog in the manger' attitude'," the report reads.

"He does not seem to experience the slightest remorse for his crime."

Skeletons in the closet

Joan is not the only person who has searched for answers about this dark episode in her family's past.

In Queensland, 54-year-old Rodney Lovell spent many years on what he described as an obsessive exploration of his family's history.

There was one uncle he was always curious about - a "gentle man" who lived in New Zealand when Mr Lovell was a child: Ansell.

"He was the one in the family who wasn't spoken about much," Mr Lovell said.



Infographic: Morris Ansell's nephew Rodney Lovell, with Rodney's mother - Ansell's sister - Sophie Lovell. (Supplied)

"I remember sharing a room with Morris' son and Morris would come in and give his son a kiss on the cheek and he'd give me a kiss on the cheek."

Despite being sentenced to life in prison, Ansell was released after 15 years and he went on to start a new life and a family of his own.

After Ansell died, Mr Lovell searched newspapers archives and found out about Ansell's darker past.

"It was a total shock - it did not compute he would be capable of murder," Mr Lovell said.

Dorothy was not able to hide the skeletons in her closet forever either.

I cried as a child with my head in a pillow wishing my mother would come and get me.

The child she bore to Ansell grew up unaware of her five half-siblings, including Joan, until she married and started doing her own ancestry research.

Shocked by what she discovered, she tracked down Joan and offered to take her to Dorothy at a public housing flat in Williamstown, where Dorothy was living.

"It was unbelievable how disinterested she was, and she'd seen her daughter for the first time," Joan said, recalling the meeting.

Sitting at the Public Records Office reflecting on what she learnt about her mother and Ansell through the files, Joan said she had gained little sympathy for her mother.

"Years ago, I cried as a child with my head in a pillow wishing my mother would come and get me," she said.

"I'd been through a gamut of emotions throughout my life.

"But knowing the history of her I now know, and however hard my childhood may have been, I still think I was lucky I didn't go with her."

Joan Atherton Hooper has documented her story in length, in her autobiography Nothing to Cry About.

Topics: murder-and-manslaughter, crime, law-crime-and-justice, history, community-and-society, brisbane-4000, melbourne-3000, vic, australia

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Man Caught Digging Up Grave Arrested

Saturday, March 5 2016 11:03 PM EST

lex18.com

Posted: Aug 18, 2015 6:47 AM PDT Updated: Aug 18, 2015 3:35 PM PDT

Man Caught Digging Up Grave Arrested



A man admits he tried to dig up his late father's body in a Lincoln County cemetery.

Michael May is charged with violating a grave, possession of marijuana, and public intoxication.

On Monday night, Lincoln County Constable, Delbert Mitchell said he saw a truck parked outside of Pilot Baptist Church in the county so he

went into the cemetery to investigate.

"I went back and hollered for him to step back in the light and he told me to step back to the dark. That's when I went and got my flashlight. He started hollering out [Bible] verses at me," Constable Mitchell said. "He told me he was trying to dig his dad up, so his dad could go to Heaven."

May's father died nearly four decades ago.

While behind bars in Lincoln County, May told LEX 18's Josh Breslow that he was trying to dig up his father and said a Bible verse led him to do it.

Reporter: "Do you believe that you belong here in jail?"

Suspect: "No."

Reporter: "Tell me why."

Suspect: "I didn't do nothing wrong."

Reporter: "Do you feel that you were violating a grave?"

Suspect: "No, no."

Suspect: "I see the truth.. he needs to be on the ground. Not under it."

Constable Mitchell said he is familiar with May and this didn't seem like him. The suspect's friends agree.

Investigators said they worry what might have happened if the constable had not shown up. They also said it appeared that May was "under the influence" at the time of the incident.

When asked if he would continue trying to dig up his father's body, May said: "It's a possibility. If the truth doesn't come out and nobody sees the truth, yeah I'll do it again."

May is expected to appear in court on Monday.

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Mary Ann Bugg: Bushranger and spy

abc.net.au

First published:
Friday 4 March 2016 9:04AM



Illustration of Mary Ann Bugg

Image: Mary Ann Bugg was part of a complex relationship between Indigenous women and white settlers that we rarely hear about. (Illustration by Lucy Fahey)

The child of a Worimi woman and a convict, Mary Ann Bugg spent her life straddling two cultures. In 1860 she met Fred Ward, also known as the bushranger Captain Thunderbolt, and they ran off together. Given her bushcraft, he was really more her sidekick than the other way around.

Robin Hood stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Maid Marian just wore a cool costume.

We're so comfortable with rogue men who cause havoc here and there, working class heroes who outwit the establishment with bravery and Errol Flynn charm.

We're not sure what to do with the same sort of swashbuckling heroes when they're women, though. Ratbag women, we'll call them: they're brave, they're bad and they don't conform to any notion of standard femininity.

It becomes even harder when the woman in question is Indigenous.

Mary Ann Bugg's story, though, is the stuff of legend. Mary Ann was a proud Worimi woman, born of an Indigenous mother and convict father near Gloucester in NSW.

She learned to read, write and pray to God at the Parramatta Orphan School. She married young, was widowed young and was living near Mudgee when she met Fred Ward, who became known as Captain Thunderbolt. She fell in love with him.

Image: Mary Ann Bugg managed to straddle two very different cultures.

(supplied)

They were newlyweds when Fred was charged with horse stealing and sent to Sydney's Cockatoo Island. Mary Ann swam across the harbour to rescue him with a file between her teeth—or so the story goes. He escaped back up north, and when the couple were reunited they began their life on the lam.

Mary Ann's bushcraft helped Thunderbolt stay ahead of the law; she was his spy, heading into town to inquire about troop movements and coach routes. She saved his life, and kept saving his life. She warned him off when the troopers came, killed their food and collected their bush tucker.

We rarely hear about it, but there was a complex relationship between Indigenous women and white settlers. Mary Ann was part of that. In convict settlements along the frontier, Aboriginal women were often the ambassadors of their people, finding ways to keep their people safe, making inroads into white culture.

While we shouldn't forget the terrible way many of these women were treated, we shouldn't forget their



Mary Ann Bugg lived in two different cultures.

agency and power, either.

If you're up in Thunderbolt country, the Hunter Region of NSW, remember Mary Ann Bugg: a proud Worimi woman who turned everyone's expectations upside down.

Comments (2)

• Annabella Bray :

05 Mar 2016 11:05:47pm

I really appreciate you bringing Mary Ann's story to life, Miranda. We need to hear what we can about these women who were so often left out of mainstream history. I would suggest however that the story of how she went on living under various aliases and covered her Aboriginality by claiming Maori descent is equally as revelatory as to women's lives at the time and what they had to do to survive. There's some excellent research

here: <http://www.thunderboltbushranger.com.au/analysis-mab-death-1867.html>

• SimonP38 :

09 Mar 2016 11:44:01am

Fascinating story. I would like to hear more about it.

However why can't we simply have a story of a remarkable woman and a remarkable relationship. Why do we have to anachronistically import modern racial politics into the story.

Just tell the story.

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<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/12187878/McBarge-Floating-McDonalds-restaurant-left-abandoned-for-30-years.html>

The Telegraph Wednesday 09 March 2016

Extraordinary floating McDonald's restaurant left abandoned for 30 years

The McBarge: Take a look inside a floating McDonald's restaurant that was left abandoned 30 years ago



The McDonald's barge was built to showcase future architecture and technology at the 1986 World Exposition. The McDonald's barge was built to showcase future architecture and technology at the 1986 World Exposition.

A floating McDonald's restaurant may sound like a wonderful fast-food industry concept but you won't find any Happy Meals at this restaurant.

The McBarge was built in 1986 for an estimated cost of \$8 million (£5.6 million) but proved to be a bad investment and has been left empty for the last 30 years in a creek on the west coast of Canada.

Urban explorers have more recently ventured inside the abandoned restaurant to capture what it looks like now, sharing the photos on a Facebook group.

The McDonald's barge was built to showcase future architecture and technology at the 1986 World Exposition and has been moored in Vancouver, British Columbia, ever since.

Now the barge could be set for a major refurbishment, with its owner setting aside more than £2 million, with plans to reopen its doors once more to the public.



McBarge: Floating McDonald's restaurant left abandoned for 30 years

The planned location for its relaunch will remain a secret for now, the barge's owner Howard Meakin previously told CBCNews.

"I can't say where. It's quite unique and it's going to be an outstanding attraction," he said. "It's going to attract a lot of attention."

"It's a number of things that came together over the last five or six months. It's government ... It's private, different companies."

He told the Vancouver Sun: "It will be restored and refitted."



Photo: Facebook/ Enoch Fast

"It could be in Vancouver, but it could be in other places as well. We're not saying exactly where it's going to be located, but the plan is that it will undergo extensive renovations."

"And I can't tell you what the plan is. We're under a non-disclosure agreement, but it fits in with the 30th anniversary of the Exposition. It will all happen in 2016, and we expect that it's going to take probably most of the year to do the work."

Meanwhile, another urban explorer captured these haunting images of an abandoned New Jersey jail.



Photo: Facebook/ Enoch Fast

In December, this very creepy photo of an abandoned motel with a hidden secret freaked out the internet.

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Photo: Facebook/ Enoch Fast

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Medieval Graveyard Discovered in Scotland

Tuesday, February 16, 2016



Aberdeen Medieval Skeletons

(Aberdeen City Council)

ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND—Renovation of the Aberdeen Art Gallery has led to the discovery of a graveyard associated with the thirteenth-century Blackfriars Abbey, a Dominican friary. A team from AOC Archaeology discovered about 40 disturbed skeletons outside the gallery, along with coffin wood, furniture, and textiles, all of which the archaeologists suspect were removed during previous development of the gallery in the nineteenth century. Under the gallery

itself, the team unearthed 52 skeletons, as well as large quantities of animal bone, coffin fixtures, and coins. "We expected to find some remains underneath the Art Gallery, but the nineteenth-century building works actually left more burials intact than we ever imagined," said Aberdeenshire Council archaeologist Bruce Mann in a press release. "This now presents a fantastic window into medieval life in Aberdeen." For more about archaeology in Scotland, go to "Letter from Scotland: Living on the Edge."

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Mexico to re-inspect dump for bodies of missing students

yahoo.com



AFP

February 29, 2016 3:05 AM



Relatives of the 43 missing students of Ayotzinapa and members of the Argentine Team of Forensic Anthropology give a press conference in Mexico City on February 9, 2016 about the human remains found in the Cocula rubbish dump

[View photo](#)

Relatives of the 43 missing students of Ayotzinapa and members of the Argentine Team of Forensic Anthropology give a press conference in Mexico City on February 9, 2016 about the human remains found in

the Cocula rubbish dump (AFP Photo/Alfredo Estrella)

Mexico City (AFP) - A new probe is under way of a garbage dump where investigators believe the bodies of 43 missing Mexican students were incinerated, the attorney general's office said.

Independent experts and victim relatives had earlier rejected the theory that the remains of the slain students from the rural teacher college in Ayotzinapa, who went missing in September 2014, were burned at the Cocula municipal dump, in southern Guerrero state.

But the Mexican attorney general's office said in a statement that specialists were already carrying out a new probe of the dump, and that results will be delivered before March 31.

Students from the teacher college were attacked by Iguala police on September 26, 2014, after the students hijacked buses that they wanted to use for a future protest.

That same night, according to the authorities, the officers took 43 students and handed them over to the Guerreros Unidos drug cartel, which killed them, incinerated their bodies at a garbage dump and tossed the remains in a nearby river.

Experts from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and Argentine forensic investigators went to the dump and said there was no scientific proof that a large fire was set there.

The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team said in mid-February that there was "no consistency between the physical evidence" and the testimony of drug gang suspects who

claimed that the students were killed and burned at the site.

The attorney general's office said Sunday that all of the evidence will be presented to experts before they issue their own report.

President Enrique Pena Nieto has endured a firestorm of criticism for the government's failure to solve the case.

More than 26,000 people have vanished since the government expanded the war on drug trafficking cartels in 2006.

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Mob tortures woman on suspicion of practicing witchcraft in eastern India

sbs.com.au

24 Feb 2016 - 7:07pm

Mob tortures woman on suspicion of practicing witchcraft in eastern India



A woman was abused by a mob in Malda district of India, after she was accused of witchcraft.

Source:

Reuters

24 Feb 2016 - 6:26 PM

UPDATED 2 HOURS AGO

A middle-aged woman was tortured by a mob on Sunday in India's eastern West Bengal state on suspicion that she practised 'witchcraft'.

The mob cut off the hair of Rupali Mandal, smeared her face with black paint, beat her up and forcibly garlanded the woman before tying her to a lamp post.

Calling her a witch, the locals threatened to burn Mandal alive if the authorities did not expel her from their locality in Malda city.

A local, Bulti Basak, said that Mandal - a housekeeper - had caused immense trouble to her family and the residents.

"We consider her to be a witch as she screams and has brought bad luck for us," said Basak.

"She stops vehicles from moving on road. She especially stops people from visiting a doctor.

"We have cut her hair off, made her wear a garland and smeared her face with black paint so that the evil inside us dies.

"We have also contacted the municipal authorities to drag her away from the city and if they do not do so, we will burn her alive."

The practice of accusing people, mostly women, of being witches and assaulting or killing them is still common in some parts of India, particularly among tribal communities, although it

is illegal.

A United Nations official said in 2013 that archaic practices such as lynching women accused of witchcraft, honour killings and dowry murders persisted in India because they remained socially acceptable.

Government statistics show there were 160 cases of murder linked to witch hunts in 2013, and 119 in 2012.

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2016/02/24/mob-tortures-woman-suspicion-practicing-witchcraft-eastern-india>

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Monster North Shore surf uncovers hidden petroglyphs

NORTH SHORE, OAHU (HawaiiNewsNow) -

hawaiinewsnow.com

Posted: Feb 12, 2016 7:18 PM PST Updated: Feb 13, 2016 10:06 AM PST

By Allyson Blair

ablair@hawaiinewsnow.com



Image Courtesy: Avi Salvio



Image Courtesy: Avi Salvio

The waves at Pine Trees surf break constantly reshape the shoreline. And when really big surf comes in, the resulting erosion can briefly uncover Hawaiian petroglyphs.

That's exactly what happened Thursday, and resident Avi Salvio was lucky enough to snap photos of two petroglyphs she spotted before they disappeared under sand again less than 24 hours later.

"They're a really special thing to see, but they disappear really fast," Salvio said.

Normally, you wouldn't even see the lava rock on the beach. That's because it's typically covered with at least 10 feet of sand.

University of Hawaii anthropology professor James Bayman said petroglyphs were created by pecking one rock with another rock.

Because the carvings at Pine Trees are rarely seen, not much is known about them. But Bayman says they could easily date back several hundred years.

It's been reported there are as many as 70 carvings chiseled into the lava rock there, mostly depicting human like figures and dogs.

Bayman says dogs were very meaningful in Hawaiian culture; their meat was reserved for men with a very high status.

In 42 years, Adam Salvio says he's only seen the carvings four times.

"As you're watching during the day the sand will cover them up and you try to sweep the sand off of them so they'll stay up a little longer," said Adam Salvio.

He always appreciates the rare glimpse of history.

"You're realizing that people were here so long ago and you know they were at your same beach and you're just reliving history again and you're doing the same thing that they've

done, playing in the same area. It's pretty cool."

Residents say there are more petroglyphs at Rock Piles and Ke Iki Beach.

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The Most Haunted House In America...Not

blogspot.com

Pennsylvania Haunts & History

Pennsylvania and its neighbors are bursting with tradition, legends, tall tales and ghosts. Each week we'll introduce one or two of their strange and spooky stories to you. Click on Pennsylvania Haunts and History to get to our website's home page.

Sunday, November 18, 2007

Renowned as the "Most Haunted House in America", the alleged history of the Congelier House is enough to turn anyone's blood cold.

The story goes that 1129 Ridge Avenue was home to Charles & Lydia Congelier, who built the house in the 1860's, and their maid, Essie. The tale begins in 1871. That's when Lydia found out Charles was having an affair with the maid, and ended it by stabbing Charles to death, beheading Essie, and driving herself insane.

The house sat vacant for the next two decades. It was remodeled to become a dorm for railroad workers in 1892, but they wouldn't stay in the house, claiming to hear the sobbing and screaming of a woman. Then it gets interesting.

Around the turn of the century, Dr. Adolph Brunrichter moved in. His maids didn't end up lovers, but cadavers. He beheaded them and then did experiments to keep the heads alive, which apparently he could do for short periods of time.

On August 12, 1901, the neighbors heard a scream and saw a red flash come from the house, blowing out all the windows. The good doctor vamoosed, and police found a decomposed body strapped to a bed and five headless corpses buried in the basement.

Needless to say, the house again remained unoccupied for awhile. Equitable Gas later fixed it up to use as a dorm for its' Italian workforce. They experienced many odd happenings, but wrote them off to hooliganism from the American workers they had displaced, at a lower wage. Then one night two of them were found in the basement, one with a board impaled through him and the other hanging from a joist.

Local police claimed it was an accident – one man fell going down the steps and speared himself on a propped up board, and the other strangled himself in the dark cellar on some loose wiring.

Naturally enough, the house was empty again. In 1920, Thomas Edison allegedly visited the home. He was interested in building a machine to communicate with the dead. The results aren't recorded, but it's said that he left the house as a great believer in the afterlife.

In 1927, police arrested a drunk who claimed to be Dr. Brunrichter. He regaled them with tales of orgies, demonic possession, torture and murder, and wrote "What Satan hath wrought let man beware" in his own blood on the wall of his psychiatric ward. The media called him the "Pittsburgh Spookman", but officials couldn't figure out if it was indeed the doctor or just an imaginative alcoholic, so they let him go, never to be seen again.

That same year, a huge gas tank was being built near the current site of the Carnegie Science Center. It blew, and the ensuing explosion rocked buildings within a 20 mile radius. The Congelier House disappeared from the face of the earth, leaving nothing behind but an 85 foot deep crater. People said

Satan himself pulled the ill fated house into the depths of hell.

It's also been said that on occasion a spectral house appears on the site, shimmering and then disappearing again to the netherworld. This was all documented in Richard Winer & Nancy Osborne's book Haunted Houses.

Alas, like most good stories, this one has its' debunker, too. Troy Taylor rebutted the Congelier House claim to evil immortality in his article Dead Men Do Tell Tales: The House On Ridge Avenue, found on the Prairieghosts site.

First, he can find no record of a Charles Congelier living in Pittsburgh or of Lydia's murderous ways, which one would expect to fill the local rags of the era. Next, he says the modest rowhouse was built in the 1880's, totally screwing up the original timeline.

Marie Congelier owned & lived in the house (at least the family name was right), and no trace of the evil Dr. Brunrichter has ever turned up, either as a tenant or a mad scientist. Ditto for the railroaders. They never roomed at the Congelier house.

Marie says that Edison never visited her humble home, and one would assume she'd remember if the Wizard of Menlo Park came calling. He also found that no reports of any deaths, accidental or otherwise, existed from the Ridge Street address. He couldn't find any mention of the "Pittsburgh Spookman" in the papers.

Finally, the gas explosion didn't send the house straight to hell, but only shattered a few windows. The house was eventually razed to make room for a highway interchange. Marie, by the way, died the morning of the gas explosion, not from the blast, but from an accidental cut. She bled to death en route to the hospital, the only known death recorded of someone from the Congelier House. Thanks for ruining a nice spooky tale, Troy.

2 comments:

Theparanormal.ca said...

Haunting to the spirits of the dead and the effect of violent or tragic events in the building's past such as murder, accidental death, or suicide

October 16, 2014 at 7:04 AM

Stephanie Hoover said...

This case has been completely debunked:

http://hauntinglypa.com/Congelier_mansion_debunked.html

April 13, 2015 at 7:49 AM

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Retrieved March 3rd. 2016 10:13pm PST USA

Man who killed his mother tells judge to set him free because mother came back from the dead to say she dropped the charges



Back from the dead (illustration)

By: Mahesh Sarin

A man who was arrested on a charge of murder for killing his mother, told a judge to set him free because his mother came back from the dead to tell him that she has dropped the charges against him, according to court documents in the United Arab Emirates.

The 29-year-old man identified as N.L. of Sharjah, killed his 50-year-old mother, who was not identified, and kept her body in his apartment for 10 days before being arrested.

Police found the body of the dead woman in the defendant's apartment after he was arrested on a charge of assault for beating a supermarket worker.

During questioning, he admitted to killing his mother, claiming that God ordered him to kill because she was a witch.

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

A judge referred the suspects to the Al Amal Psychiatric Hospital for a mental health evaluation after he told the Sharjah Criminal Court that his mother came back from the dead to drop the charges.

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Dying thoughts to the wife he left: Harrowing love note found next to mummified captain

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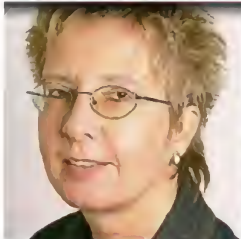
- Dying thoughts to the wife he left: Harrowing love note found next to mummified captain

Dying thoughts to the wife he left: Harrowing love note found next to mummified captain

A HARROWING note has been found inside the yacht of the mummified captain who was found seven years after going missing.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 04:03, Wed, Mar 2, 2016 | UPDATED: 07:27, Wed, Mar 2, 2016



Barobo police

The mummified body of German adventurer Manfred Fritz Bajorat was found by two fisherman at the weekend just 50 miles off of the Philippines.

And now a note has been found lying beside the tragic captain, 59, revealing his final thoughts to his wife Claudia.

"Thirty years we're been together on the same path. Then the power of the demons was

stronger than the will to live.

"You're gone. May your soul find its peace. Your Manfred."

The captain was found seven years after he was last seen and was discovered with photographs and the haunting letter beside him.

He was married to a woman known as Claudia, who he broke with to go on his travels. She died of cancer in 2010.

Inside the cabin, fishermen found photo albums, and tins of food strewn all over the deck.

Newly-found images within the album have revealed an insight into his former life, showing the story of his young family on their travels and trips to Paris and Luxembourg.

It is unknown the cause of death of Mr Bajorat. One theory is that he suffered a heart attack.



Barobo police

The German embassy in Manila is trying to trace family in Germany.

It is believed he has a daughter, Nina, a captain of a freight vessel.

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Mummified body of German adventurer found aboard ghost ship

torontosun.com



First posted: Monday, February 29, 2016 02:24 PM EST | Updated: Monday, February 29, 2016 02:32 PM EST



Manfred Fritz Bajorat.

(facebook.com/barobo.policestation)

Two fishermen discovered the mummified body of a German adventurer, found dead Saturday drifting on his abandoned yacht off the coast of southern Philippines.

The salty sea air and dry winds likely preserved the body of Manfred Fritz Bajorat, found eerily perched over his radio, as if attempting to make a final distress call when he died.

Bajorat had been cruising around the world in his 40-foot sailboat -- called SAYO -- for the past 20 years.

It's unknown how he died, or how long he'd been dead before being discovered.

One friend told German newspaper Bild that he hadn't heard from him in over a year.

Another fellow sailor told the newspaper Bajorat was a "very experienced sailor" and didn't believe he put himself in harm's way to cause his own death.

"The way he is sitting seems to indicate death was unexpected, perhaps from a heart attack," Dr. Mark Benecke, a forensic criminologist in Germany, told Bild.

According to Filipino police in Barobo, who posted photographs of the ghostly discovery on their Facebook page, the fishermen noticed the sailboat's destroyed sail from afar, and boarded the boat to investigate.

Police are now working with the local coroner to investigate a cause of death.

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Mummified captain found in 'ghost ship' he sailed in for seven years after death

express.co.uk

A MUMMIFIED captain was found in a mystery boat drifting 40 miles from the shore...still sat in the seat where he is believed to have died.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 00:00, Tue, Mar 1, 2016 | UPDATED: 02:01, Tue, Mar 1, 2016

The man, who appears to have been trying to make a desperate mayday call, has been identified as German adventurer Manfred Fritz Bajorat.

He was found by two fishermen at the weekend in the seas off Surigao del Sur province, about 50 miles off Philippines.

The grey corpse, which was preserved by dry ocean winds, hot temperatures and the salty air, was still sat at a desk near radio equipment on the 40ft yacht called Sayo, which was partially submerged.

It is not yet clear when he died, but no one has reported seeing him since 2009.

Local officials remain puzzled by the death and have yet to completely rule out foul play as some of his personal items could have been "damaged by force".



EPA-POLICE

Two fishermen spotted the drifting "ghost ship" and climbed on board before finding the body and photo albums, clothes and tins of food strewn all over.

Paperwork on board identified him, but the cause of death is unknown.

The mast of the boat was broken, but it is not clear if this happened before or after his death.

One theory is he could have suffered a heart attack.

A year before what appears to have been his last voyage, in 2008, he broke up with his wife who used to venture with him.

However, she has since died of cancer so can shed no more light on his movements.

He was a very experienced sailor. I don't believe he would have sailed into a storm. I believe the mast broke after Manfred was already dead.



BaroboPolice

Fellow sailer Dieter

Police want to retrace his last journeys and hear from anyone who talked to him last.

So far, the last known sighting was in Mallorca in 2009, when he met another sailer called Dieter.

This man said: "He was a very experienced sailor. I don't believe he would have sailed into a storm.

"I believe the mast broke after Manfred was already dead."

Barobo Police spokeswoman Goldie Lou Siega appeared to rule out signs of foul play.

She said: "We have no evidence of a second person aboard and no weapon was found on the yacht."



Barobo police

Dr Mark Benecke, a forensic criminologist in Cologne, said: "The way he is sitting seems to indicate that death was unexpected, perhaps from a heart attack."

The German embassy in Manila is trying to trace family in Germany.

It is believed he has a daughter, Nina, a captain of a freight vessel.

An autopsy is taking place in Butuan City.



EPA

The boat was taken by police

inspection at the port of Barobo.

22 Comments

(edited)8 hours ago

The Emperors New Clothes



Is the equivalent of David Cameron's EU deal

Dead in the water and running adrift for years

(edited)8 hours ago

LexCarter

If the boat was "upturned" - why was he just sitting there defying gravity?

(edited)4 hours ago

NormanMiles

Had you had read the article, or better still, got someone to read it to you, you would have found out that it was not

upturned, but water logged, hence the fishermen were able to go onboard.

(edited)10 hours ago

AIM

Sometimes the DE disgusts me. I constantly get moderated for posting mild, innocuous comments, either because it may offend a certain cult, but here they are posting a photo of this poor man. Is there no level low enough they will go to sell papers? There is no dignity in death, but he should have been afforded some at least from the DE. A photo of the boat would have been OK to print, but for the sake of his family and friends there is no way that this should have been shown. From one sailor to another, RIP Manfred.

(edited)13 hours ago

onlymakebelieve

How are these pics allowed to be published,,,he must have family/friends somewhere,,,we need to show a bit of respect/decency in regards to something like this....

(edited)11 hours ago

chami

there is no respect or decency in newspapers today, and I think it's appalling.

(edited)13 hours ago

Mike Spilligan

This is another illustration of how sparsely our oceans are populated. I think there have been other instances before now.

(edited)13 hours ago

YvehcTelorvehc

Gerne segeln, Herr Captain...

(edited)14 hours ago

Elysium

You think you have seen most of what life has to offer and then something really unexpected like this comes over the horizon.

To think that he has been floating at sea for 7 years.

For all that time, the last 6 New Years Eves, your last 6 birthdays, the weddings, funerals and

parties you have been to. The holidays you have taken. He has been sitting silently at that desk with just the wind and rain to break the stillness.

This world is full of strange things.

(edited)15 hours ago

Native geordie

His daily log book would give his boats position up to the day he died,
if he was a professional sailor it would have been filled in every day

(edited)15 hours ago

PhilDin

"still sat in the seat where he is believed to have died" No shlt Sherlock? he's hardly likely to have died and then got up and walked to the chair is he?

(edited)15 hours ago

hammer6

lol!

(edited)15 hours ago

hammer6

PS looks as though he had a haircut recently too.

(edited)14 hours ago

EXIT THE EU UL NOT GET ANOTHER CHANCE!

LOOOL pi££ed myself at your reply n1 made me laugh :-)

(edited)14 hours ago

Richard (Thailand)

PhilDin. I really should not laugh because this is a bit tragic but your comment was a real corker.

(edited)3 hours ago

TypeO

You beat me to it, LOL.

First thing I thought when I read it.

"Believed" to have died???

LOL

(edited)15 hours ago

RichardMitton

Someone must have reported him missing at some point.

(edited)15 hours ago

Fight or Die

poor guy, no one should die alone.....

(edited)15 hours ago

Flatdog

Depends on the company!

(edited)15 hours ago

Native geordie

It sometimes happens its one of those sad facts of life

At least he died doing what he wanted to do

(edited)2 hours ago

NotInMyName

better than dying in an NHS corridor waiting for a bed.

(edited)12 hours ago

VladNet

on the contrary, it is pathetic to die while others watching. He had the best end possible.

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MUMMIFIED in a WEEK: Bizarre autopsy finding over how German sailor was petrified on boat

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**MUMMIFIED in a WEEK:
Bizarre autopsy finding over
how German sailor was
petrified on boat**

A GERMAN sailor mysteriously found sitting dead in his yacht was turned into a mummy in just a week, the results of an autopsy have concluded.

By Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 06:01, Thu, Mar 3, 2016 | UPDATED: 07:33, Thu, Mar 3, 2016



IG•POLICEISSUE

When fishermen found the body of Manfred Fritz Bajorat still seated at a desk in the cabin of his partially submerged 44-foot boat, about 60 miles off the coast of Surigao del Sur, in

the Philippines, he was so mummified it was initially believed his corpse could have been sailing the ocean for up to seven years as the last reported sighting of him was in 2009.

But an autopsy report released yesterday has concluded he died of a heart attack as recently as just seven days ago.

Police have also now ruled out any foul play involved after initially considering the possibility amid claims food and personal items had been tampered with.

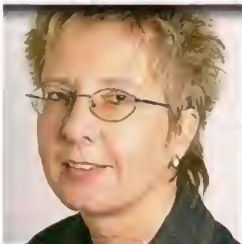
Philippines national police spokesman Chief Superintendent Wilben Mayor said: "The cause of death is acute myocardial infarction based on the autopsy by the regional crime

"The German national is estimated to have been dead for more or less seven days."

Forensics experts explained a combination of tropical heat, dry wind, and salty sea air can quickly preserve or mummify a corpse, with the process

happening more quickly on thinner people.

Forensic Egyptologist Dr Janet Davey from the Department of Forensic Medicine at Monash University said it was entirely possible.



POLICEISSUE

She said: "All that you need is the right conditions so the body does not decompose."

"For a body to mummify naturally (different to the ancient Egyptians, who mummified bodies artificially), the conditions need to be dry and with a bit of a breeze going through."

Related articles

The cause of death is acute

myocardial infarction based on the autopsy by the regional crime laboratory

Philippines national police spokesman Chief Superintendent Wilben Mayor

"It also helps when the body is in an enclosed area so insects do not attack the body."

The 59-year-old veteran yachtsman was found by two fishermen at the weekend who thought he looked like he may have been trying to make a mayday call on radio equipment next to him.

His body was also next to photographs of and a haunting letter to his wife, Claudia, who died from cancer in 2010. The couple split in 2008.

Paperwork on board identified him, but this is still to be done officially by daughter Nina, who is flying out from Germany.

The mast of the boat was broken, but it is still not clear if this happened before or after his death.

Initially, the last known sighting of him was in Mallorca in 2009, when he met another sailer called Dieter.

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Saturday, December 12, 2015

Murder of a School Mate by Two Girls.

4 comments

Little Murders

(From *Sun*, Baltimore, Maryland, December 25, 1879)

Murder of a School Mate by Two Girls.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 24.—A dispatch to the *Enquirer*, from Hagerstown, Ind., states that a murder, which occurred near a country schoolhouse between Centreville and Williamsburg, two weeks since, has just come to light. Two school-girls, about fifteen years old, daughters of wealthy parents, were expelled from the school for bad treatment of a school-mate of the same age, named Miss Kates. While the latter was on her way home, after school, they assaulted her—one knocking her down with a base ball bat and the other jumping on her and breaking four of her ribs. Miss Kates managed to crawl a short distance to her home, and died soon after communicating the facts to her mother. According to reports the parents of the assailants went to the murdered girl's mother and persuaded her by a bribe of \$3,000 to keep the affair secret. The facts, however, leaked out through school children who witnessed the assault, and have created much excitement.

Murder of a School Mate by Two Girls.

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Posted by Robert Wilhelm

4 comments :

Heather Lindekugel says:

December 21, 2015 at 1:35 PM

And we thought kid only became evil in this century! Nope. When it comes to sin, there's nothing new under the sun.

NorthsideRasta says:

January 14, 2016 at 6:17 PM

"We only became evil this century"?Wow,ever hear of Australia,South,& North America? Settlers decimating the indigenous populations?

Moonraker says:

February 11, 2016 at 11:52 PM

She specified crimes by kids, which has little to do with crimes against Native

Americans, as heinous as those were.

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Mysterious Graves Discovered at Ancient European Cemetery

nationalgeographic.com



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

This six-month-old baby is one of the oldest infant skeletons found in Europe. It was buried 8,400 years ago by hunter-gatherers near Berlin. Photograph by Rémi Bénali, National Geographic

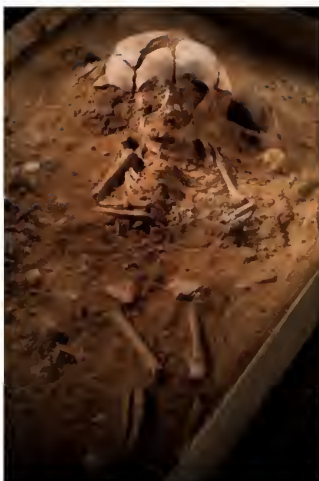
WATCH: Get a glimpse of the well-preserved, 8,400-year-old skeleton of a baby found in Germany.

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<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/02/160211-oldest-cemetery-burial-europe-baby-upright-germany-hunter-gatherer.html>

Mysterious Graves Discovered at Ancient European Cemetery

Archaeologists in Germany have uncovered the bodies of children and of one adult man who was buried, strangely, standing upright.



By Andrew Curry

PUBLISHED Thu Feb 11 12:00:00 EST 2016

One of the oldest cemeteries in Europe has recently been discovered, with graves dating back almost 8,500 years. Two of the most intriguing finds are the skeleton of a six-month-old child and a mysterious upright burial of a man in his early 20s.

The German cemetery, called Gross Fredenwalde after a nearby village, belongs to a time known as the Mesolithic, when Europe was populated by hunter-gatherers. At a press conference Thursday morning in Berlin, excavators announced that nine skeletons have been uncovered on the hilltop burial site so far, five of them children younger than 6 years old. And the researchers found ample evidence that more graves remain unexcavated.

"It's rare for the Mesolithic to find multiple graves in one place," says forensic anthropologist Bettina Jungklaus, who excavated one of the bodies. "They were mobile people, ranging over the landscape."

Excavations in 2013 and 2014 uncovered evidence of the prehistoric graveyard, found 50 miles north of Berlin on a hill 300 feet above the plains below. The hilltop's hard, rocky soil would have been a tough place to dig graves. With no water sources nearby, it would have

been a bad place for a settlement, too.

In a paper published in the journal *Quartär*, Thomas Terberger, the archaeologist who led the recent dig, says the burials are evidence of careful planning. "It's not an accumulation of burials by accident, but a place where they decided to put their dead," says Terberger, of the Lower Saxony Department of Historic Preservation. "It's the first evidence of a true cemetery in northern Europe or Scandinavia."

That, colleagues say, makes the spot special. "It's a big surprise," says Erik Brinch Petersen, an archaeologist at the University of Copenhagen. "Hunter-gatherer people typically buried their dead right next to their houses. Here in northern Europe, a site like this is unique."

The infant skeleton is rare, too. Researchers say it's the earliest infant skeleton ever found in Germany, and one of the oldest in Europe. Excavators removed the fragile remains from the cemetery in a single, 660-pound (300 kilogram) block of earth, making it possible to carefully expose the 8,400-year-old skeleton in the controlled setting of a lab. "It's really rare to find an intact burial like this, because an infant's bones are so small and fragile," says Jungklaus.

Laid to rest not long after it turned six months old, the baby is almost perfectly preserved, its arms folded across its tiny chest. The bones and nearby soil are stained red from ochre pigment used to decorate the body for burial.

The excellent preservation offers researchers a wealth of information. Chemical signatures in the bones, for example, could show whether the infant was breast-fed; DNA could establish links to other skeletons in the cemetery and determine the infant's gender.

Learning more about its short life and how it died could tell archaeologists more about what conditions were like for Europe's early inhabitants. "We can look at possible illnesses, and perhaps determine the cause of death," Jungklaus says. "Children are always the weakest link—they're the first victims when the environment or living situation changes."

While the infant burial is remarkable, the body of a young man found nearby has excavators puzzled—and excited. Buried more than 1,000 years after the infant, the man was entombed standing up, together with bone tools and flint knives. The man's skeleton suggests he lived a pretty easy life. It doesn't show signs that he did a lot of physically taxing labor. "He looks like a flint knapper or experienced craftsman, rather than the strongest boy of the group," Terberger says.

Stranger still, the vertical grave was filled in just as far as the man's knees at first. His upper body was allowed to partially decay and fall apart before the grave was filled in. At some point, a fire was built on top of the tomb.

One possible explanation comes from hundreds of miles to the northeast. Standing burials similar to the one at Gross Fredenwalde have been found in a cemetery called Olenij Ostrov in modern-day Russia, from about the same time. Researchers have long assumed culture flowed into ancient Europe from the south, but these odd burials suggest that there was active migration or communication across northern Europe as well. "This man is an indication



of such eastern influences,” Terberger says; DNA results from his bones might be able to tease out the connections.

From early analyses of his DNA and the grave goods he was buried with, it’s clear the young man buried standing up was a hunter-gatherer, like the infant he shared the cemetery with. But he died about 7,000 years ago,

meaning the hilltop cemetery was in use for more than a millennium.

His death occurred about the same time the first farmers arrived in this part of Europe, part of a process that changed the face of the continent. The overlap might help researchers understand what happened when hunter-gatherers first encountered immigrants bringing new technologies and lifestyles from far to the south. “Late hunter-gatherers and early farmers lived side-by-side,” Terberger says.

But the evidence from the graveyard suggests that relations were chilly. Archaeologists have found farmer settlements from the same time period just 7 miles (10 kilometers) away from the hunter-gatherer cemetery—but no signs that the people buried there had any meaningful contact with their neighbors. “They must have looked in each other’s eyes, but not exchanged anything—neither goods nor genes,” says Petersen.

National Geographic

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Mystery 'bloodsucking vampire' predator kills over 200 chickens and ducks in China village - Eye 2 eye Radio

eye2eyeradio.com

By Benefo Buabeng -
Feb 29, 2016

A mystery bloodsucking predator has killed over 200 chickens and ducks in a village in China, with the only clue to its identity a four-toed webbed footprint about the size of a young child's hand. Police and locals in Pudong, near Shanghai, have been hunting for the predator since the attacks began and have started night patrols to protect the livestock.

South China Morning Post reports that the predator had left large bite marks in the birds but had not eaten the flesh. Instead, it had sucked out the blood of its prey. Attacks have been occurring over the last few weeks and while people have tried to set up traps with live chickens as bait, they have been unsuccessful.

Villages had thought the creature might have come from Shanghai Wild Animal Park, which is about 2km away, but officials said no animals have escaped or gone missing recently. Other than the muddy footprint left behind, the only other indication of its size was a football-sized hole torn in a wire fence.

Officials from the Pudong Forestry Station said the footprints and bite marks indicate the predator is a racoon or a badger. However, locals said the bites bigger than that of a dog, leaving widespread speculation as to what the predator could be.

Vampire animals

There are a number of animals that feast on blood. Aside from mosquitos and other insects, larger vampire animals include the aptly named vampire bat, vampire finch and vampire squid. One particularly infamous blood-drinking fish is the candirú, which lives in the Amazon and Orinoco rivers. The parasitic catfish attacks other fish by swimming into their gills and feeding on the blood. In one documented case, it swam up a man's urethra and tried to feed on blood and tissue before dying.

More recently, a vampire squirrel was caught on camera for the first time ever, with researchers seeing it hopping around a forest in Borneo. The Bornean tufted ground squirrel (*Rheithrosciurus macrotis*) and its vampire tendencies has long been known in folklore. Hunters told researchers in 2014 that they wait on low branches for a deer to pass. They then jump on their back and bites their jugular vein. After the deer bleeds to death they disembowel the creature and eat the stomach contents.

Another mythical creature often blamed for killing animals is the chupacabra – meaning goat sucker in Spanish. There have been reported sightings of the chupacabra all over the world, with tales telling of a reptile-like creature draining its prey of blood. However, autopsies of its victims soon showed they had not been drained of blood. Furthermore scientists normally attribute any suspected attacks to dogs and coyotes, both of which are known not to eat their

prey following a kill.

In Pudong, the simplest and straightforward answer to the bird-killing beast is likely to be the correct one.

Source: ibtimes.co.uk



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Woman in 'Mystery Machine' mini van leads police on pursuit

krctrv.com

Suspect still at large

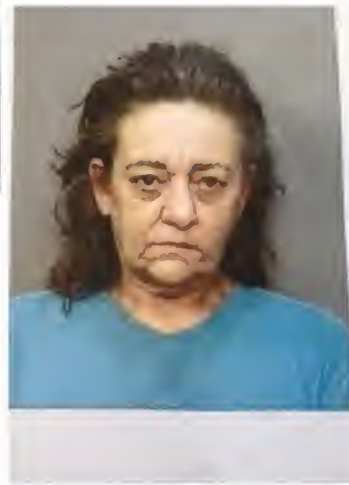
By Ericka Soeso@bontencalifornia.com

POSTED: 5:17 PM Mar 06 2016 UPDATED: 6:13 AM Mar 07 2016

REDDING, Calif. -



A Shasta County woman led law enforcement officers on a pursuit in a mini van painted to look like the 'Mystery Machine' from the Scooby Doo cartoon.



On Sunday at 12:50 p.m., a probation officer with Shasta County Probation contacted Redding Police Department regarding Sharon Kay Turman, 51, wanted for a probation

violation.

According to police, Turman was found operating the 1994 Chrysler minivan painted teal and green in the area of California Street and Shasta Street.

When officers tried to conduct a traffic stop, Turman took off in the van, said police. A pursuit began as Turman sped through South Market Street, said police.

The chase came to a stop near Buena Ventura and Highway 273, but Turman continued to speed southbound on Highway 273, said police.

According to police, Turman drove through an intersection against a red light hitting four other vehicles.

The California Highway Patrol helicopter later located the van at Hill Drive just north of Anderson. Officers said Turman then continued the chase through the city of Anderson and onto Interstate 5 at speeds over 100 mph.

Turman continued onto Highway 36 westbound, where she was spotted by the CHP helicopter abandoning her vehicle, said officers.

Turman's current whereabouts are unknown. She is wanted by the Redding Police Department as well as Shasta County Probation. Anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of Sharon Kay Turnman is encouraged to contact the Redding Police Department at (530)225-4200 or Secret Witness of Shasta County at (530)243-2319.

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The mystery of Kazakh 'Sleepy Hollow' is finally solved

02:26 EST, 16 July 2015|

dailymail.co.uk

Mystery of Kazakh 'Sleepy Hollow' is SOLVED



Victims: Photographer Vera Salnitskaya spent a night in the village earlier this year and was told of the bizarre symptoms that the residents suffered over the last few years **Polluted:** When carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon levels rose in the disused mine in the mining town of Krasnogorsk, oxygen levels fell in the village of Kalachi **Sick:** Side effects of the gas, which caused people to fall unconscious for days (pictured), included headaches and memory loss **Ghost town:** Now the mystery has finally been solved, residents of Kalachi (pictured) and neighbouring Krasnogorsk are being evacuated **Abandoned:** 68 of the 223 families in Kalachi (pictured) have already been moved and the plan is to relocate the rest of them by the end of the year **Bizarre:** Women have told how their boyfriends and husbands come round from the deep slumber - which lasts between 12 hours and six days - craving sex **Harmful:** One of the debilitating symptoms of the mystery poisoning in Kalachi (pictured) was an inability to control the bladder **Empty:** One man suffering from side effects of the gas of the ghost town that is Kalachi (pictured) suddenly leapt out of bed, giving a Nazi salute to his doctors, greeting them with 'Heil Hitler' **A photojournalist who spent the night in Kalachi** told how children had seen their mothers grow eyes on their foreheads. One boy saw horses and light bulbs flying around his head **Plot:** Conspiracy theorists believed they were being deliberately poisoned by property developers who wanted them out of Kalachi (pictured) **Paranormal activity:** One man, who conducted his own basic scientific experiments, is convinced the phenomenon is due extra-terrestrial activity

Mystery of Kazakh 'Sleepy Hollow' is SOLVED: Villagers who fell asleep for days at a time and suffered hallucinations were poisoned by disused uranium mine nearby

- Mysterious Kazakhstan village of Kalachi was nicknamed 'Sleepy Hollow'
- Residents fell asleep for days and men had uncontrollable sex cravings
- They were being poisoned by disused uranium mine the town was built on
- The Soviet-era mine was pumping out high levels of carbon monoxide gas
- The residents will now be evacuated and given new homes

By Will Stewart for MailOnline

The mystery of the 'Village of the Damned' where a sleeping sickness causes people to fall unconscious for days, mild-sex drives has been solved.

mannered pensioners swear and men have unusually-high

For three years people in the Kazakhstan village Kalachi – nicknamed 'Sleepy Hollow' – have been puzzled as they fall asleep for two days at a time.

Bizarre hallucinations, especially children, led one girl to see an elephant trunk on her mother and a boy imagine horses and light bulbs flying around his head.

Men there wake up after between 12 hours and six days' sleep craving sex, walking around with erections – and causing nurses to 'blush'. This constant state of arousal can last for up to a month.



Poisonous: For three years, carbon monoxide gas has been seeping out of an abandoned uranium mine in Kazakhstan and poisoning the villagers of Kalachi

Mystery: Some have suffered severe headaches and memory loss as a result of the gas leak from the mines (pictured) - which has affected 160 villagers since 2012

'The doctors laugh, and the nurses are embarrassed when they see our men in this state,' said one woman whose husband was a 'victim' of the condition.

But, although known side effects include headaches and memory loss, the long-running mystery, which has affected 160 villagers since 2012, finally looks to have been solved.

The culprit is an old disused Soviet-era uranium mine the village is built on, which is pumping out high levels of carbon monoxide, poisoning the villagers.

Hailing the breakthrough, Kazakh vice president Berdybek Saparbayev told MailOnline: 'The cause of the bizarre sleeping illness has been determined.'

'After numerous medical tests, our researchers have confirmed that carbon monoxide is to blame for sleeping epidemic in Kalachi village.'

When carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon levels rose in the disused



mine, oxygen levels fell in the village, he added.

Sleepy Hollow, Kazakhstan: Villagers suffer brain ailment

Tests – independently verified by experts in Prague and Moscow – showed levels of carbon monoxide in the air to be ten times normal levels.



Russian scientist Leonid Rikhvanov blamed it on the uranium mine too, although he said it was caused by gases created when the disused mine filled up with water.

'My model is the only one which explains what is going on there,' he said.

Radon and other inert gases which release as a result of the decay of uranium are squeezed out by groundwater and through the cracks in the ground rises to the surface

Russian scientist Leonid Rikhvanov



'To describe it simply, when the uranium mines were abandoned, they began to fill with ground water.

'Radon and other inert gases which release as a result of the decay of uranium are squeezed out by groundwater and through the cracks in the ground rises to the surface.

'It can accumulate in the cellars.'



Now the cause is known, Kalachi – 250 miles from the border with Russia - and neighbouring 'ghost city' Krasnogorsk, both affected, are being evacuated.

The state is currently running an evacuation plan, under which people should be given a place to live in a new location. The government pays 250,000 tenge (£890) to help meet the costs.

Some 68 of the 223 families there have already been moved – with the rest being relocated by the end of the year.

The poisoning sparked deep concern at the village when no one knew what was causing the strange behaviour – turning zombie-like people living there into the 'walking dead'.

A photojournalist who spent the night there told how children had seen their mothers grow



© Vera Sainitskaya - The Siberian Times



© Vera Sainitskaya - The Siberian Times



© Siberian Times

eyes on their foreheads.

She also said usually mild-mannered pensioners denounced their nurses as 'whores' and 'prostitutes'.

Meanwhile, women told that when their husbands and boyfriends come round from the deep slumber, lasting from 12 hours to six days, they often awoke craving sex.

As soon as men wake up, they need sex right there and then, and this feeling lasts for at least a month
Female resident of Kalachi

'One woman said: 'As soon as men wake up, they need sex right there and then, and this feeling lasts for at least a month.'

One man just out of hospital 'still couldn't eat properly let alone walk, but he was all over his wife,' she revealed. 'He really needed it.'

Unsurprisingly, the men were reluctant to talk about this aspect of the sleeping illness.

But another woman, in her 40s, who had taken her son to live in a neighbouring village to protect him from the unexplained disease, said: 'My husband after he woke up called me and said: "Listen either you visit me right now, or I'll go to you".'

There are other debilitating symptoms,

including an inability to control the bladder.

'One poor man wet himself as he went to hospital. So the paramedics removed his pants and there he was, not properly conscious but in a state of sexual excitement,' a resident said.

'The view of the men lying in the hospital ward rooms is called "tents".'

Some rant uncontrollably. Locals cite the example of one man, known for his impeccable



© Vera Sainitskaya-The Siberian Times

manners, who cursed nurses as 'whores' and 'prostitutes' when he was suddenly struck down by the Kalachi drowsiness.

Another man, apparently recovering, suddenly leapt out of bed, giving a Nazi salute to his doctors, greeting them with 'Heil Hitler', while a 60-year-old grandfather imagined he was a rooster, flapping his arms around and crowing.

Conspiracy theorists believed they were being deliberately poisoned by property developers who wanted them out because there was a valuable gold mine.

One, who conducted his own basic scientific experiments, is convinced the phenomenon is due extra-terrestrial activity.

He said: 'It looks like some kind of beam went through the village. I do not know what it can be.

'Maybe some special equipment, like emitter. I just see that the location of the homes, where people fell asleep are in straight lines, as if some beam cut through them.'

He added: 'I'm not speaking about UFOs. I am simply trying to understand what is going on here.'

Comments (4)

The-Commentator, Testing-my-

standup-routine, United Kingdom, 7 months ago

This happens a lot on the night shift at my place.

Kriss Day, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 7 months ago

The most toxic legacy here isn't the uranium mine, it's the Marxist-Leninist philosophy that powered the USSR.



© Vera Salnikskaya-The Siberian Times

SteveT, Canberra, 7 months ago

Ok, what's the real reason? Carbon monoxide is not a by product of radioactive decay. If true, what has been stored, disposed of in the mines???

JOnah, up North, United Kingdom, 7 months ago

Yet all the tory-worshipping sheep of little englandshire are apparently desperate to have a fracking well under

every home and their national parks mined for minerals.

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Mystery sea creature washes up from the deep

09:56, 16 Feb 2016 Updated 16:19, 16 Feb 2016 By Ruth Halkon

mirror.co.uk



Facebook/Ethan Tippa

Speculation: The mystery sea creature with razor sharp teeth has been confusing people

With the body of a legless crocodile and the head of a dolphin, this strange sea creature looks more like something out of medieval myth than a real animal.

It was photographed after washing ashore on the banks of Lake Macquarie in New South Wales in Australia.

Ethan Tipper snapped an image of the creature before posting it online to see if anyone could identify it.

The creature has a long, slender body with scales and a tail like a crocodile with no legs, a head shaped like a dolphin's and a mouth full of razor sharp teeth.

The image has divided social media with some claiming it is a large hairtail, a long, slender fish found in tropical seas, while others suggest it has been photoshopped.

But Australian Museum fish collector Mark McGrouther told Daily Mail Australia he suspects it is a pike eel, native to deep waters on the east coast of Australia.

He said: "This is the first time I have ever seen one of them in the flesh.

I suspect it was caught and discarded by fisherman who got more than they bargained for when they tried to reel it in."

Pike eels are known to thrash about when caught and can seriously damage nets. They are native to Australia's east coast, can travel 100 metres deep to feed and can grow up to 1.8 metres in length.

Comments

(23)

Login

(edited)5 hours ago

Roudenkoff

- My God! Why so many lies, violence, war, death, debauchery? - We asked the people of God.

- You do not like all this?

- Of course not!

God answered:

- Then do not do it!

(edited)7 hours ago

PaulR

The Creature looks like an eel. A Species they need to categorize. Where there is one, there is usually hundreds.

(edited)8 hours ago

DaveFernandez

Perhaps they're simply previously unknown sea creatures that died and washed ashore.

(edited)9 hours ago

iceman

What a world we live in. A whole "newspaper" article about a photo of a decomposing eel. What do you have lined up for tomorrow, Mirror? A grainy photo of a white dog turd that proves alien visitations?

(edited)9 hours ago

KJKj793

It needs 'bout tree fiddy.

(edited)10 hours ago

JackDavis

It's obviously an eel that's been dead awhile.

(edited)11 hours ago

NabiSmyth

ALLIGATOR GAR (*Atractosteus spatula*)

(edited)10 hours ago

GregHawkins

I agree. Just looks like a big Gar!

(edited)11 hours ago

ooonaughtykitty

Someone probably released their pet alligator gar in the Lake.

(edited)11 hours ago

EARWAX1000

Not to worry, the Japanese will make a new brand of super-sushi

(edited)11 hours ago

GDivadNosdivad

What a crock!

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Museum of Man Explores Myth and Reality of Cannibals - Times of San Diego

timesofsandiego.com


Museum of Man Explores Myth and Reality of Cannibals

Posted by Chris Jennewein on March 3, 2016 in Arts | 71 Views | [Leave a response](#)

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A necklace from New Guinea made from human and dog teeth. Museum of Man collection

Cannibals turn out to not be what you think they are in a unique exhibit opening Saturday at the Museum of Man in Balboa Park.

It turns out they're warriors from many cultures, European kings and queens, American and European sailors, American colonists, accident survivors and the sick — all have eaten human flesh in different situations.

Highlights of the one-of-a-kind exhibit include:

- Hearing the emotional, first-hand account of the Uruguayan rugby players who, trapped high in the Andes Mountains, resorted to cannibalism to survive
- Playing the "Donner Trail" video game based on the doomed Donner Party: will you live or die?
- Learning why European explorers falsely used the label of "cannibal" to enslave and control people around the world
- Seeing how parts of the human body have been used as medicine over the centuries

The exhibit is recommended for ages 10 and up and special charges apply. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

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Guilds in late medieval Flanders: myths and realities of guild life in an export-oriented environment

Peter Stabel *

Department of History, University of Leiden, Postbus 9519, 2300RA Leiden, Netherlands

Abstract

Craft guilds were essential for the organisation of urban society in the late middle ages. They not only had their role to play in structuring the urban economy; in the dense urban system of the Low Countries they very often also had important political, cultural and social functions. Historical research has focused during the past decades on the latter functions in particular, leaving aside a reassessment of the older assumptions of the negative impact of guilds on the urban economy. This paper argues that a multifaceted approach to guild life is necessary, whereby the economic role of guilds is integrated into newly acquired knowledge about guild life. In general guilds functioned as much more open and flexible economic institutions than has been acknowledged by most scholars. Guild regulation, ubiquitous in the documents, must, therefore, be reinterpreted and contrasted with its actual implementation. Moreover, the analysis of artisan careers and of the traditional life cycle (apprentice–journeyman–master) clearly shows how demographic realities such as high death rates and high migration rates cannot but have stimulated the open character of many of the urban guilds, in particular those involved in the export-oriented industries.

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Keywords: Guilds; Artisans; Low Countries; Urban society

1. Guilds: one-sided cliché or multifaceted reality

The opinion of historians on the social and economic role played by guilds in late medieval and early modern cities has changed considerably throughout the last

* *E-mail address:* p.stabel@let.leidenuniv.nl (P. Stabel).

deciding industrial output.²⁸ In the early modern period, however, the dependence of the urban economies on export industries was clearly diminished. In the sixteenth-century Flanders textile production had shifted to the countryside or to semi-urban industrial centres such as Hondschoote, while luxury and refining industries that were more reliant on investments in raw material and on highly specialised labour were concentrated in the larger cities and some smaller towns.²⁹ So the urban guilds in the southern Low Countries became increasingly responsible for these luxury industries and for urban and regional supply, and they were less involved with mass-produced export commodities. Hence the possible objections against more closed guilds became irrelevant, and the corporate authorities, stimulated by the masters' desire for protection, tended to limit access to the guilds.

Furthermore, it would be a mistake to see guilds and their concerted action with city authorities in regulating production and exchange, as mere defenders of their own interests and privileges. In defining circumstances of exchange and manufacture—guidelines that could be negotiated and renegotiated in light of political and economic circumstance—they had to take into account the economic interests of producers, merchants and retailers, but also of consumers, local, regional and central authorities. *Zunftzwang*, the enforcement of guild monopoly, was paramount in these negotiations, but it was also subject to limitations in the context of an international and regional economy. Boundaries of guild regulation were incessantly discussed, which in the end led to very heterogeneous and often contradictory sets of rules. Depending on the balance of power (and this was only rarely in favour of the small guild masters, who disposed of very little capital; journeymen and apprentices had almost no role to play at all) regulation could go either way.³⁰ On the whole, regulation aimed mainly at implementing a moral framework. But despite the egalitarian rhetoric and the ideology of guild solidarity (or rather the illusion of solidarity among guild members), there is no doubt that regulatory systems were functioning in an economy which allowed and stimulated various forms of competition.

²⁸ Hans Van Werveke, 'Die Stellung des hansische Kaufmanns dem flandrischen Tuchproduzenten gegenüber', *Beiträge zur Wirtschafts- und Stadtgeschichte. Festschrift für Hektor Ammann* (Wiesbaden, 1965), 296–304; Peter Stabel, *De kleine stad in Vlaanderen: bevolkingsdynamiek en economische functies van de kleine en secundaire stedelijke centra in het Gentse kwartier (14de–16de eeuw)* (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schone kunsten van België. Klasse der letteren, 156, Brussels, 1995), 122 ff; Robert S. DuPlessis, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt: urban stability in an era of revolution 1500–1582* (Cambridge University Press, 1991); Denis Clauzel and Silvain Calonne, 'Artisanat rural et marché urbain: la draperie à Lille et dans ses campagnes à la fin du moyen âge', *Revue du Nord*, 72 (1990), 531–573.

²⁹ Van der Wee, 'Industrial dynamics'; Peter Stabel, 'Ambachten en textielondernemers in kleine Vlaamse steden tijdens de overgang van Middeleeuwen naar Nieuwe Tijd', in: *Werelden van verschil. Ambachtsgilden in de Lage Landen*, ed. Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly (VUB press, Brussels, 1997), 79–98; Emile Coornaert, *Un centre industriel d'autrefois. La draperie-sayetterie d'Hondschoote. XIVe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1930).

³⁰ Hans Van Werveke, 'De medezeggenschap van de knapen in de middeleeuwse ambachten', *Mededeelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schoone kunsten van België. Klasse der letteren*, 5 (Antwerp, 1943).

Employment and urban supply were paramount in keeping social equilibrium in the city, while profit and price formation were essential for merchants and retailers. Therefore, price formation on the market had to be transparent, and prices for food and industrial goods had to be kept relatively accessible for city-dwellers and country folk. The urban supply was not to be put in danger. The urban market, which formed the essence of urban functions, had to remain a viable undertaking. Transactions were mostly restricted to the halls and to specific spots on the market. There were clear topographical restrictions between the various retailers and, for example, entrepreneurs selling to merchants (drapers should in no way be confused with *lakensnijders*, sellers of cloth by the yard, or any other market dealers in textiles). Just as happened in the production chain, market segmentation was paramount to guarantee the standard quality required, but at the same time the interests of entrepreneurs and merchants were protected against possible competition from the small retailing guilds.³¹

There seems to have been a world of difference between rules and realities.³² In most guilds, the procedures of transaction and production were clearly defined. This was particularly so when it concerned the commercial exchange between manufacturers of export textiles and their customers, the international merchants. In the cloth towns, the arrival of merchants was often announced when the hall officials tolled a bell. This allowed the drapers to assemble their woollens and bring them to the cloth hall. In most towns, sales could only start when everybody was present. The woollens had to be piled and presented following the customs of the drapery. The merchants usually only had a limited period of time to purchase the goods. Opening hours of the cloth hall and days when transactions were allowed were clearly defined. There were also restrictions as to the number of woollens the drapers were allowed to sell, although these quantities were many times larger than the actual output of one draper. When buying woollens, merchants or their brokers were not allowed to give false information to their colleagues, in order to avoid false rumours concerning quality and price. Information concerning a particular transaction could only be passed on once the transaction had been concluded. One can, however, doubt that such measures promoting equality and solidarity among drapers were very efficient. The fact remains, as we shall demonstrate, that they did not prevent the concentration of both production and trade.

Discrimination and guild control seem ubiquitous, but there seems to be little evidence of actual monopolies if the proper taxes were paid and if the guild authorities gave permission, which they were inclined to grant, because they had a financial interest in doing so. Hence, there were many exceptions to guild monopoly. Moreover, barriers, which divided occupations and guilds, were often easy to breach. People were able to change their occupation rather easily. In fourteenth-

³¹ Peter Stabel, 'Urban markets, rural industries and the organization of labour in late medieval Flanders: the constraints of guild regulations and the requirements of export oriented production', in: *Labour and labour markets between town and countryside (middle ages—19th century)*, ed. Bruno Blondé, Eric Vanhaute and Michèle Galand (Corn Publication Series 6, Turnhout, 2001), 140–157.

³² Sosson, 'Les métiers', 339–348.

and fifteenth-century Ghent for example fur makers and dealers had to choose each year whether they wanted to work with old furs or new ones. Moreover, lots of old fur dealers also seemed to have been members of the guild of dealers in old clothing or they worked in close partnership with dealers in old clothing. And these examples can easily be multiplied. Special cases were the guilds that developed in the course of the middle ages towards a hereditary system. This was usually linked to the ownership of stalls in a hall, the traditional reward for subsidising the sales infrastructure and the hall itself. The number of fishmongers and of butchers was fixed and stalls were inherited. But this heredity did not prevent the presence of outsiders in the market if urban supply required this. The conclusion seems obvious. In many aspects, guilds were mostly only able to enforce their desire for equality in the details of marketing and production procedures, but the true economic flows in the export economy of the Low Countries were often decided on a very different level. Not only was guild regulation itself likely to be open for negotiation, its actual implementation was even more dependent on the balance of political and economic power in the cities and towns.

3. Urban demography, artisan careers and the realities of guild life

Urban society was characterised by very specific demographic realities. The gaps caused by high mortality, in particular infant and child mortality, had to be compensated by constant streams of immigrants. These migration flows remain of crucial importance for explaining urban demographic patterns, but they were also important for establishing social networks, for developing political organisation or for deciding economic opportunity. Unfortunately urban migration patterns in the late medieval cities of the Low Countries can only partially be understood as only the urban middling groups of skilled artisans, local traders and wealthy landowners could gain any real benefit from purchasing citizenship of a town (burghership)—and the registers of new burgesses are the only dynamic source to assess migration.³³ Burghership was sometimes a condition in order to enter a craft guild

³³ For a general survey on the conditions of acquiring burghership: Philippe Godding, *Le droit privé dans les pays-Bas méridionaux du 12e au 18e siècle* (Brussels, 1987), 58–59. Some towns demanded an entrance fee, the cost of which would rise during the late middle ages and would eventually become a significant social threshold. In other towns, there was only a limited registration fee, usually amounting to no more than a couple of daily wages for a skilled artisan. This fee played an important role in the attraction of different towns. After the revolt of the city of Bruges against Philip the Good in 1436–38 and the ensuing period of economic turmoil, the city's aldermen successfully attracted Flemish migrants by lowering the entrance fee (Marc Boone and Peter Stabel, 'New burghers in the late medieval towns of Flanders and Brabant: conditions of entry, rules, reality', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, Beiheft 30 (*Neubürger im späten Mittelalter. Migration und Austausch in der Städtelandschaft des alten Reiches (1250–1550)*), ed. R.C. Schwinges (Berlin, 2002), 317–332; Erik Thoen, 'Immigration to Bruges during the late middle ages', in: *Le migrazioni in Europa secc. XIII–XVIII. Atti della Venticinquesima settimana di studi, 3–8 maggio 1993*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Istituto internazionale di storia economica F. Datini Prato, Pubblicazioni. Serie 2: Atti delle settimane di studio e altri convegni, 25, Florence, 1994), 453–491.

or it was an advantage because guild entrance fees were usually much higher for non-burghers. For unskilled workers, temporary migrants and outcasts of society, however, it was an unnecessary luxury. Numbers of new burghers are, therefore, indicative of the migration of skilled and semi-skilled labour and reflect not so much the demographic, but rather the economic attraction of towns.

A clear positive correlation seems to have existed between economic and demographic growth on the one hand and the volume and direction of migration on the other hand. The increasing demand for specialised labour in the growing urban economies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries strengthened the flow of skilled migrants. Despite the preponderance of regional country folk among immigrant workers, there was always an important group of newcomers coming from more distant regions. Increasing numbers of immigrants also came from other towns as the urban economy grew. The fact that Bruges was an international commercial city during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is clearly reflected in the origin of its new burghers in the same period.³⁴ In contrast to the origin of new burghers in the small and secondary towns, most of whom came from the immediate hinterland of the town, Bruges recruited its immigrants mainly from a distance of more than 35 km. In the heyday of the city's commercial development, a very significant share of the immigrants came from foreign principalities.³⁵ In Oudenaarde new burghers were mainly recruited within the county itself (80%), but when the industrial town boomed in the first years of the sixteenth century, the proportion of foreigners and townsmen among its new burghers was actually equal to that reached in the commercial metropolis of Bruges a century before. With increasing distance, migration also became more inter-urban.³⁶

This highly mobile world of skilled artisans provided the recruiting ground for the urban guilds. High numbers of new guild members could not but originate from other towns or from the surrounding countryside. In fact resident artisans who lived for generations in the same town and were employed in the same business must have been only a minority, be it a very influential minority, if one considers their hold on offices within the guild and the urban governing bodies. The same holds true for the social networks of individuals and relatives. These must have been less fixed and static than generally accepted. A recent survey of the presence of family members in the urban social fabric in the Low Countries has shown that, except for some dynasties of merchants, rentiers and artisans, individuals

³⁴ W.P. Blockmans, 'The creative environment: incentives to and functions of Bruges art production', in: *Petrus Christus in Renaissance Bruges: an interdisciplinary approach*, ed. M.W. Ainsworth (New York/Turnhout, 1995); Blockmans, 'The Burgundian Court and the urban milieu as patrons in fifteenth century Bruges', *Economic history and the arts*, ed. M. North (Cologne, 1996), 15–26.

³⁵ Thoen, 'Immigration to Bruges', 340 ff. See also Jan Verbeemen, 'Immigratie te Antwerpen', in: *Mededelingen van de Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring voor Leuven. Lustrumuitgave. De Brabantse Stad* (Leuven, 1965), 81–100.

³⁶ On other towns in Flanders: Peter Stabel, *Dwarfs among giants: the Flemish urban network in the late middle ages* (Studies in urban social, economic and political history of the medieval and modern Low Countries 8, Leuven/Apeldoorn, 1997).

rarely could rely on the presence of an extended family in their home town; instead families tended to live scattered in the various towns and in the countryside. Hence other networks—that very often tended to be less engaging and less durable—were organised within the corporate organisations and within the neighbourhood. They replaced more and more the traditional relations of the so-called 'vrienden en maghen' (friends and relatives).³⁷ Urban society was indeed a much more anonymous world.

Little quantitative data exist about the realities of apprenticeship and mastership in the cities of late medieval Europe. Recent research on the social profile of new masters and apprentices in some Bruges guilds, however, seems to confirm the enormous impact of newcomers in the urban craft guilds.³⁸ The material, which involves data for the coopers', the bowmakers' and the painters' guilds in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Bruges, offers striking figures on the background of apprentices and masters. It becomes clear that the great majority of the apprentices, trained in the urban guild, for one reason or another never made it to becoming master. Between 1385 and 1550, 358 apprentices (masters' sons did not need to be registered as apprentices and most of them seem to have received their training within their own household anyway), and 267 masters were registered by the bowmakers' guild, but only 79 of the listed apprentices—less than one quarter—became, in the same period, masters. The others possibly had died, emigrated, they lacked capital, lost interest or they found other types of employment, but they never achieved the status of an independent entrepreneur in Bruges. Assuming every apprentice respected the prescribed training period of four years, it took an average of more than seven years after the end of the apprenticeship before an apprentice could achieve promotion to mastership. Only one apprentice became master immediately after his training period was over, but several succeeded after only one or two years; the longest period was 32 years, but most apprentices needed between five and seven years. As the industry got into difficulty because of declining outlets in Flanders and abroad, mastership tended to close down even more for locally trained apprentices.

Similar data exist for the coopers' guild in Bruges. In a commercial metropolis such as Bruges, the coopers provided an essential service, in particular for the

³⁷ Myriam Carlier, 'Solidariteit of sociale controle? De rol van vrienden en magen en buren in een middeleeuwse stad', in: *Coeur et marge dans la société urbaine au bas moyen âge. Core and periphery in late medieval urban society*, ed. Myriam Carlier, Anke Greve, Walter Prevenier and Peter Stabel (Leuven/Apeldoorn, 1997), 71–91.

³⁸ Stabel, 'Apprentices'. Data for the painters' guild are published in Peter Stabel, 'Organisation corporative et production d'œuvres d'art à Bruges à la fin du Moyen Âge et au début des Temps Modernes' (in press). See also Jean-Pierre Sosson, 'Une approche des structures économiques d'un atelier d'art: la corporation des peintres et selliers de Bruges XVe–XVIe siècles', *Revue des Archéologues et Historiens de l'Art de Louvain* (1970), 91–100; id., 'A propos des aspects socio-économiques des métiers d'art aux anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux XVe–XVIe siècles', *Revue Belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art*, 51 (1982), 17–25; id., 'Structures associatives et réalités socio-économiques dans l'artisanat d'art et du bâtiment aux Pays-Bas (XVe–XVIe siècles). Perspectives de recherche', in: *Artistes, artisans et productions artistiques au moyen âge. I: Les hommes*, ed. Xavier Barral I Altet (Paris 1986), 111–121.

trades of wine and beer. In the very same way as for the bowmakers, the economic success of the coopers was, therefore, dependent upon the trade cycle in north-western Europe. But in contrast with the bowmakers, they also performed a vital function for the local and regional economy. Between 1375 and 1500, no less than 966 apprentices and 685 masters were registered in the coopers' guild. Only 164 of the 966 apprentices eventually made it to the ranks of master in the guild, a poor 17%. Again it must be stressed that apprentices trained within their own family were not registered. The chances for becoming master were best in the early fifteenth century (in particular in the 1400s, 1410s and 1420s: a period of relative wealth in Bruges), but opportunity declined in a drastic way in the 1430s (a period of political turmoil in that city) and towards the last quarter of the fifteenth century (when Bruges' international function was in full decline). A cooper trained in Bruges needed an average period of almost 10 years to become master in the same city, although an important minority (one-third) needed less than six years, and some apprentices even worked for a period of 20 years and more, perhaps as a journeyman in the guild, before they eventually made it to the ranks of the masters in the guild in the autumn of their career.³⁹

Trends in the painters' guild (a very heterogeneous corporation of painters, mirror-makers, glaziers, saddle-makers, etc.) more or less point to the same phenomenon. Only 102 apprentices or 22% of the total number eventually made it to the mastership, but the direct link with the general trend of the Bruges market seems to be less important than for the other occupational groups. Perhaps the painters were able to redirect with more success their output to the growing Antwerp market. Differences between the different branches in the painters' guild are very pronounced: the saddle-makers were a much more closed organisation than the painters and glaziers. The average time span between the end of apprenticeship and the start of a career as independent master was about nine years (but the period was remarkably longer for glaziers, almost 12 years), but a minority (10%) of the apprentices needed 18 years and more. For some painters, we know from biographical data that they worked in the meantime for other master painters in Bruges, in other cities or elsewhere (for example at European courts), but a great number of them must have been engaged as well in other occupations (many painters had other occupations, even bakers and innkeepers were among those).⁴⁰

The impressive figures for dropouts must, however, be put in perspective. The figures compare two moments of entry, that of the apprentice and that of the master. But many things may have happened in the meantime. As many studies on guilds in the early modern period in particular demonstrate, for various reasons a lot of apprentices did not finish their period of training (high death rates for young adolescents; people often switched to other occupations; apprentices left their

³⁹ See also Jean-Pierre Sosson, 'La structure sociale de la corporation médiévale. L'exemple des tonne-liers de Bruges de 1350 à 1500' *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, 44 (1966), 457–478.

⁴⁰ Till H. Borchert, 'De mobiliteit van kunstenaars. Aspecten van de cultuuroverdracht bij de overgang van de late Middeleeuwen naar de Nieuwe Tijd', in: *De eeuw van Van Eyck 1430–1530. De Vlaamse Primitieven en het Zuiden* (Ghent/Amsterdam, 2002), 32–45.

masters before the end of the contract), while on the other hand once a journeyman many were not able to become master and preferred, probably because of lack of a starting capital, to remain in service.⁴¹ Also, during the often very long period between apprenticeship and mastership artisans must have been confronted with many choices and difficulties. Moreover, even after childhood and adolescence, adult death rates were still very high. In the Low Countries the yearly adult urban death rate can be estimated between 34% and 40%.⁴² This means that of a group of 100 apprentices, after 12 years (a good average between the start of the training period and mastership) already one-third had died. Skilled artisans probably belonged more to the middling groups in urban society and death rates may have been slightly lower than for the average town dweller, but death already explains a substantial part of the low success rate of apprentices. The high geographical mobility comes as an obvious second explanation. There was, as the data demonstrate very convincingly, no strong impediment for achieving social promotion to mastership in other towns.

The social profile of masters also points to the extremely high mobility of skilled artisans within the guild economy, in particular in periods of economic growth.⁴³ Of all master coopers in Bruges in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, fewer than one quarter were apprenticed in Bruges (as a newcomer in the guild), fewer than one quarter were masters' sons, while more than half (53%) were immigrants to the city (and had received their training in other privileged places; only a tiny minority was granted mastership without any prior training at all).⁴⁴ Furthermore clear chronological shifts can be recognized. Bruges-trained apprentices had the best opportunities in the first half of the fifteenth century of becoming master, and masters' sons were well represented throughout this period, but they seem to be very numerous in particular in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. But paradoxically, the decline of the Bruges market did not prevent newcomers from entering the coopers' guild on a massive scale in the 1470s, 1480s and 1490s, when both masters' sons and Bruges apprentices became very rare. The locals probably had a more correct appreciation of Bruges' declining needs for the services they provided. Although the source material is less clear, similar trends can be recognized for the bowmakers' guild where only 40% of all masters were apprenticed in Bruges (the

⁴¹ For the early modern Low Countries, recent research on clothing guilds by Bibi Panhuysen, *Maatwerk. Kleermakers, naaisters, oudkleerkopers en de gilden (1500–1800)* (IISG, Amsterdam, 2000), 137–142 and 169–171; Harald Deceulaer, *Pluriforme patronen en een verschillende snit: sociaal-economische, institutionele en culturele transformaties in de kledingsector in Antwerpen, Brussel en Gent* (IISG, Amsterdam, 2001), 261–290 offers a general introduction to the position of apprentices in the guild curriculum.

⁴² Stabel, *De kleine stad*, 54–62; Erik Thoen, *Landbouweconomie en bevolking in Vlaanderen gedurende de late middeleeuwen en het begin van de moderne tijden. Testregio: de kasselrijen van Oudenaarde en Aalst (eind 13de-eerste helft 16de eeuw)* (Ghent, 1988), 64–93; David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch, *Les Toscans et leurs familles. Une étude du catasto florentin de 1427* (Paris, 1978), 454–455; Marie-Thérèse Lorcin, *Vivre et mourir en Lyonnais à la fin du moyen âge* (Paris, 1981).

⁴³ Thoen, 'Immigration'.

⁴⁴ Alfred James, *Brugse poorters*, vols. 1–3 (Handzame, 1974–1990); R.A. Parmentier, *Indices op de Brugsche poorterboeken* (Geschiedkundige Publicatiën der Stad Brugge, vol. 2, Brugge, 1938).

others were either master's sons or immigrants). In the painters' guild, surprisingly, the local element in the recruitment of masters is much greater: only one quarter of all Bruges painters in the last quarter of the fifteenth century were immigrants who had got their training elsewhere; one quarter were masters' sons, and half of the painters were newcomers in the guild who were apprenticed in the city itself. The great painters of the Renaissance in fifteenth-century Bruges, who often came from other towns inside and outside the Low Countries (Jan Van Eyck, Gerard David, Hans Memline, Petrus Christus), were, therefore, atypical in their own guild. Only in periods of relative decline did the profile of new master-painters resemble more that of the coopers and bowmakers (but with a greater share of masters' sons). The demand for paintings must still have been important, so sons of masters were still inclined to follow their fathers' footsteps.

Research about the careers of journeymen is still lacking for the late medieval cities of the Low Countries. The success rate of journeymen bowmakers (or rather those craftsmen who entered the guild after having enjoyed training in other 'free' cities, as Bruges apprentices did not have to register after their training period in order to become a journeyman) was even worse than that of the young apprentices: only about 7% eventually became master in the guild. The few immigrant-journeymen, who achieved the status of master, needed a slightly shorter period than the apprentices (an average of 6.7 years); but the more successful journeymen, however, became master after serving only one year as a journeyman, which suggests that they must have already had some capital when they entered their new hometown. Therefore, we must assume that the many immigrants who entered the guild as masters were doing this immediately after their arrival in the city. Hence, they must have had enough capital or access to capital on arrival to set up an independent business.

All this leads us to conclude that apprenticeship and years of service as a journeymen offered no guarantee whatsoever of entering the guild elite of masters. They were merely steps in a guild career. Only masters' sons were more secure in their prospects for the future. After their apprenticeship they could usually enter the mastership quite easily. Missing starting capital could be advanced from within the former household of the father or mother. Non-masters' children could remain in the city, start off as journeymen and eventually after a shorter or a longer period, depending on their social background, save enough money for the entrance fees and for the starting capital necessary for having their own workshop. In some guilds, such as the painters, they stood a better chance; in other guilds, such as the coopers, opportunities to become master were only slight. After the necessary conditions were fulfilled, they could become master in their own city, or as the quantitative data seem to show, very often also in another city. For most accomplished apprentices, however, such an issue would never be an option: they were forced to remain journeymen or to switch their occupation.

The world of skilled artisans and of guild regulated labour in the late medieval city was structured as a very complex social system. Various systems of social mobility, social exclusion and labour organisation existed at the same time and in the same place. The conditions of apprentices, journeymen and masters were only

marginally influenced by fixed guild regulation. Regulation was too scarce and not specific enough. Instead guilds preferred social custom and contract negotiation as more decisive elements in establishing personal and occupational relations between apprentices, journeymen and masters. Hence a very diversified system became possible. The regime of social mobility enjoyed by masters' children (of course in particular masters' sons) was completely different from that of foreign apprentices or journeymen. The first group was a stable group, forming the core of guild organisation and political life within the guild. Sons seem to have got their training most of the time within their own household or in workshops owned by close relatives,⁴⁵ and once trained and independent, master's sons were quickly able to find their own workshop, avoiding in this way the bottleneck of journeymanhood. Many of them could also enter the political organisation of the guild (some could eventually even hope to enter urban politics).

People who were apprenticed outside their own household or outside their immediate social networks had much less chance of becoming master. The overall majority, sometimes even more than 90%, remained journeymen after an initial training. They changed jobs or they moved away to stand a better chance in another town. The influx of newcomers, apprentices, journeymen and masters, followed the same pattern. Incoming apprentices and journeymen stood little if any chance of becoming masters themselves. The only successful newcomers were those who had already experienced training elsewhere and who had gathered enough capital to buy a mastership and start off their own workshop. These new masters, foreigners in the city who surprisingly constituted a very substantial part, sometimes even the majority of all guild masters, could develop their own networks within the guild system, in the same way as masters' sons, although these had of course the important advantage of having these networks already established at the moment when they became master.

4. Export industries in the Low Countries: the constraints of guild regulation?

Even a very brief analysis of guild regulation already points to the many difficulties which the traditional image of guilds as regulating economic bodies encoun-

⁴⁵ This contradicts, at least for the Low Countries, the statements on the urban household economy in Ad Knotter, 'Problems of the "family economy". Peasant economy, domestic production and labour markets in pre-industrial Europe', in: *Early modern capitalism. Economic and social change in Europe 1400–1800*, ed. Maarten Prak (Routledge, London/New York, 2001), 135–160 (based on German examples studied by Michael Mitterauer). See also Mitterauer, 'Grundtypen alteuropäischer Sozialformen: Haus und Gemeinde in vorindustriellen Gesellschaften', *Stuttgart, Kultur und Gesellschaft: neue historische Forschungen*, 5 (1979), id., 'Familie und Arbeitsorganisation in städtischen Gesellschaften des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit', in: *Haus und Familie in der spätmittelalterlichen Stadt*, ed. A. Haverkamp (Städteforschung. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster, Reihe A, Darstellungen, Cologne/Vienna 1984), 18, 1–36 and id., 'Servants and youth', *Continuity and Change*, 5 (1990), 11–38.

ters. Although the general philosophy is clearly one of redistribution of wealth and the solidarity of guild members, the many exceptions and nuances in guild regulation suggest a much more diverse institution which allowed in many ways entrepreneurs and merchants to organise flexible systems of manufacture and marketing. Furthermore, the many cases of guild litigation and the endless number of violations of guild regulation show the realities of a much more creative economic system, which sought to evade restrictive regulation. The question should be asked whether such violations were rather normal practice than exceptional fraudulent behaviour. Moreover, the small commodity production system was a much more flexible system of organising manufacture than is traditionally assumed.⁴⁶ Therefore, restrictions as to the size of each production unit are not so much the result of *egalitarian policies* of the guilds and a liability for entrepreneurial initiative, but rather a pragmatic economic response to demand and to the necessity of producing a standard quality within the constraints of pre-industrial urban economy.⁴⁷

The period of crisis which struck the traditional Flemish export industries in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is an ideal period for assessing the flexibility of guild organised economies. Urban economies were forced to adapt to changing market conditions and growing competition from abroad. They did so by specialising in luxury fabrics, leaving the lower and middle range woollens to the secondary urban centres and to the rural industries. This conversion in towns, where often more than half the population depended directly upon the manufacture of cloth, caused serious social problems. But in the end the urban economies did surprisingly well. A new equilibrium was reached in the fifteenth century and the cities and towns were able to adapt in two directions. The growing rural economy was integrated in the commercial network of the towns, and cities attracted new industries, while, at the same time, they capitalised on the know-how and capital, which were already present. Instead of a whole range of quality woollens, the focus was placed on the highest qualities of woollens and on other textiles, which had a high added value in common, such as tapestries, fine linens, mixed fabrics, silks, etc. Changing commercial axes triggered the decline of Bruges as an international commercial gateway, but this was more than compensated for by the new role of Antwerp from the late fifteenth century onwards. A very functional distribution of manufacture in town and countryside was achieved. This did not happen without difficulty and much resentment among urban entrepreneurs, but in the end commodities with high added value were manufactured in the cities; the others, where wage levels were more important for price formation than technical skill, were transferred to the countryside. The final production stages of the rural textiles, however, often remained an urban monopoly. In general, the involvement

⁴⁶ The classic study on small commodity production remains Robert S. DuPlessis and Martha C. Howell, 'Reconsidering the early modern urban economy: the cases of Leiden and Lille', *Past and Present*, 94 (1982), 49–84, but recently many nuances have been added (a general survey of literature: Farr, *Artisans*, 45–94).

⁴⁷ Denis Morsa, 'Les métiers aux temps modernes, reflets de situations médiévales?', in: *Les métiers*, 232–233.

century.¹ Depending upon the ideological and political background of the historians who have dealt with guilds and corporate organisations from the nineteenth century onwards, these were seen as positive contributions, as symbols of an ideal world of political unity and peaceful social and economic coexistence, where the consequences of class distinction and of harsh economic competition were, although not completely eradicated, easily overcome by systems of self-regulation and social symbiosis, as the early precursors of bourgeois democracies, and as an antidote to class conflict and capitalistic excess. These ‘corporationists’ were often inspired by religious and political ideologies in late nineteenth-century society. Such ideas were particularly popular among church leaders and social moralists, but later on, between the two world wars, also among fascist ideologists and their partisans and even parts of the labour movement.² On the other side of the political spectrum, guilds were considered as an archaic reminder of economic sclerosis, where innovation of products and techniques was sacrificed to the interest of a static rent-seeking elite of small-scale merchants and entrepreneurs. Marxists and Smithian liberals find themselves here in this assessment. In their eyes, guilds became a barrier to progress towards a true capitalistic society. For the former, guilds were an obstacle to the historical process of class conflict towards the ultimate emancipation of the workers, for the latter an impediment to free entrepreneurship and the bourgeois democracy.³

Although such one-sided ideological approaches have by now all but completely disappeared from historical analysis, and although even ideologically inspired assessments have become much more careful in their formulations, guilds and their connotation of archaic, unpractical, and protectionist institutions, which intended to serve group interests rather than entrepreneurial initiatives by concentrating on fair distribution of income, still dominate historians’ views on late medieval and early modern economic organisation.⁴ Guilds are still considered as responsible for a dogmatic focus on the quality of finished goods in an ill-omened policy of protecting both producers’ and consumers’ interests. Hence, labour productivity, com-

¹ Antony Black, *Guilds and civil society in European political thought from the twelfth century to the present* (London, 1984), 3–11; Pascale Lambrechts, ‘L’historiographie des métiers dans les principautés des anciens Pays-Bas: acquis et perspectives de recherche’, in: *Les métiers au moyen âge. Aspects économiques et sociaux*, ed. Pascale Lambrechts and Jean-Pierre Sosson (Publications de l’Institut d’Etudes médiévales, 2nd series, 15, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994), 143–155.

² D. Luyten, ‘Ontstaansvoorwaarden voor het corporatisme. Het model van het neo-corporatisme in het licht van de Belgische ervaring uit de jaren dertig’, *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 19 (1993), 316–323; Marc Boone, ‘Les métiers dans les villes flamandes au bas moyen âge (XIVe–XVIe siècles): images normatives, réalités socio-politiques et économiques’, in: *Les métiers au moyen âge*, 3–5.

³ Henri Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique, tome 3. De la mort de Charles le Téméraire à l’arrivée du duc d’Albe dans les Pays-Bas* (Brussels, 1912), 220; Walter Prevenier, ‘Henri Pirenne et les villes des anciens Pays-Bas au bas moyen âge’, in: *La Fortune historiographique des thèses d’Henri Pirenne. Actes du colloque organisé à l’occasion du cinquantième de la mort de l’historien belge par l’Institut des Hautes Etudes de Belgique* (Brussels, 1986), 48–49.

⁴ Walter Prevenier and Marc Boone, ‘De sociale geschiedenis van de steden in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik van de 13de tot de 19de eeuw: nieuwe tendensen’, *Tijdschrift van het Gemeentekrediet*, 47 (1993), 25–42.

of urban entrepreneurs in the rural industries seems very important. From antagonism, the urban–rural relations had developed into clear osmosis and collaboration.⁴⁸

Even within the urban industries, there were clear structural differences between the export industries and the service industries, both in the organisation of manufacture and enterprise and in the marketing of the finished commodities. In the service industries, there was often no distinction between industrial and commercial functions. Craftsmen sold their own manufactured goods in their workshops or market stalls; guild regulations created clear barriers against non-members or foreigners conquering the markets, and, if not, guild members in general still received clear preferential treatment in retailing activities. In the export industries, the relation between entrepreneurs and merchants was much more complex. Most industries depended on investments, on the supply of raw materials, on the finishing of textiles, and sometimes merchants were even involved in the actual manufacturing process, and craftsmen had become mere wage earners. In other industrial activities, the small-scale craftsmen remained in control of their entrepreneurial activities. The complete dependence on the international market was without doubt the weakness of the industrial organisation, but it was at the same time a constant stimulus to adapt production according to the needs of the merchants. This is clearly reflected in the development of guild regulation. The massive export of textile commodities required standardised production and hence the strong regulation of quality and manufacturing processes. This regulation could only be guaranteed by the urban guilds.⁴⁹ It had guaranteed the survival and conversion of the traditional cloth industry; now it provided the conditions for the success of the new industries in an international market.

Even the proto-capitalistic organisation of the manufacture of tapestries in the town of Oudenaarde and its surrounding countryside during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries could not be achieved without tight guild control.⁵⁰ In fact urban guild regulation was able to penetrate in the countryside, where rural weavers worked as wage earners for urban entrepreneurs. In contrast to the manufacture of rural linens and coarse woollens, this industry demanded high investments for the raw materials. The expensive tapestries were not only manufactured in urban centres of production (Tournai, Brussels, and in Flanders Aalst, Geraardsbergen and, of course especially Oudenaarde, famous for its *verdures*), but an important part of the total output of smaller and less refined goods were produced by rural tapestry weavers. In contrast to the rural weavers in the linen industry, these were integrated into urban systems of manufacture. Commercial networks were put in place to tighten contacts between the countryside and the

⁴⁸ The following is based on: Stabel, *De kleine stad* and id., *Dwarfs among Giants*.

⁴⁹ Van der Wee, 'Industrial dynamics' and various contributions cited in Boone and Prevenier, 'Sociale geschiedenis'.

⁵⁰ Henri Pirenne, 'Note sur la fabrication des tapisseries en Flandre au XVI^e siècle', *Vierteljahrsschrift für Sozial- und wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 4 (1906), 644–656; Martine Vanwelden, *Het tapijtweversambacht te Oudenaarde 1441–1772* (Oudenaarde, 1979).

town of Oudenaarde, and entrepreneurs and merchants also established links with the firms in the gateway-cities of the Low Countries. Some entrepreneurs were able to establish very important enterprises. In 1541 each master employed an average of 29 artisans, but among them there were many small-scale tapestry entrepreneurs, so a minority must have controlled the output of hundreds of weavers and dyers. Entrepreneurs often leased out looms and provided the artisans and journeymen with the raw materials. The latter depended sometimes for the rest of his career on a particular entrepreneur, because of various debts and financial obligations. Various systems of subcontracting were readily being used: new masters could still carry out work for others as long as all their obligations towards their former employer were fulfilled. Moreover, the larger scale of tapestry enterprises avoided the general use of subcontractors, a practice that existed in many of the urban cloth industries.

Solutions for the growth of enterprises were therefore not only sought within the traditional guild system, but they were created by capitalistic systems of controlling the labour market (refined systems of *putting-out*). The rural tapestry-weavers were in fact mere wage earners, supplementing their agricultural income with ad hoc weaving activity. The high cost of raw materials and the very labour-intensive production process effectively prevented the concentration of the means of production in their hands. They often received only piece-wages, which depended on skill and the quality and quantity of the work; mostly they did not own their looms, which were leased out by urban entrepreneurs, who also supplied them with the raw materials. The ties linking rural artisans to the urban industry were kept very close. Rural weavers had to be members of the urban guild of tapestry weavers, without, however, enjoying the same advantages as the urban master-weavers. They were not allowed to have apprentices (and thereby they were robbed of an obvious way of hiring cheap labour), and most of all there were strict limitations as to their capacity to be involved in trade. Rural weavers were subordinated to the jurisdiction of the urban guild. The dominance of the urban entrepreneur seems to have been complete. Urban and rural weavers had to comply with the guild regulations concerning quality and labour conditions; working for two entrepreneurs at the same time was forbidden. They could only use the raw materials and designs provided by the entrepreneur. Moreover, they could not work for their own account.

In the traditional exclusively urban industries as well, more flexible systems of organising manufacture were introduced: various types of putting-out and a continuing development of commercial capitalism in the gateway cities of the Low Countries. These developments had already profoundly influenced the structure of the medieval cloth industry; they would now define the organisation of production and commerce in the new industrial centres as well. The small commodity producer remained often a crucial figure in the traditional methods of production of the cloth industry. In the new industries (light cloth, tapestries, linens) his role was taken over by the merchant, the brokers and the large-scale entrepreneur. The census of 1541 in the cloth- and tapestries-producing town of Oudenaarde is revealing. It shows the impact of the rising tapestry industry and the still surprisingly great role of the more traditional cloth manufacture:

they employ 75% of the total population, while the servicing industries and retail employ only one quarter. Yet only one quarter of all guild masters was active in textiles: the workshops of small tailors, shoemakers, cobblers, cabinet-makers, and bakers were much more numerous. These masters employed one or two apprentices and/or journeymen (the smallest workshops can be found in the arts and crafts, the metalworkers and in food processing). The situation was completely different in the export industries. Only 41 tapestry weavers, as already mentioned, employed 1187 apprentices and journeymen: 42% of the total labour force or 29 for each master. Even higher figures can be found for the traditional cloth industry: 19 masters with 603 employees or 32 for each master for the weavers, six masters with 155 employees or 26 for each master for the fullers. Chronicles even mention masters employing hundreds of artisans in both town and countryside. Probate inventories reveal petty commodity producers besides large-scale entrepreneurs in both the cloth and tapestry business. Only in the finishing industries (dyers) was the average size of an enterprise much smaller: seven master dyers employed an average of only three apprentices and journeymen.

The average size of a textile enterprise in Oudenaarde seems to be exceptional, even when compared with the growing gateway-city of western Europe, Antwerp, where an entrepreneur in export textiles had an average of only 4.4 employees. Most workshops in Antwerp were, however, active in the finishing industries, which were also smaller in Oudenaarde. In the traditional cloth towns of Flanders, there are no indications that similar enterprises existed. Even in the most successful cloth industry in sixteenth-century Europe, the manufacture of light woollens at Hondschoote, production was organised within the framework of the small workshop. In the few remaining traditional cloth towns, such as Poperinge and Menen, there were only craftsmen with very small workshops. Nonetheless, even this did not prevent concentration of production. This can be clearly acknowledged for the Menen cloth industry. Menen drapers manufactured among the most expensive Flemish black cloth destined for Mediterranean consumers (in the early sixteenth century the Florentine firms of Frescobaldi and Gualterotti traded in Menen woollens). As in other traditional cloth industries of Flanders, entrepreneurs were not only responsible for the industrial production, they were also involved in the marketing of their woollens towards the community of international merchants in Bruges and Antwerp. Weavers, fullers or dyers were often also drapers, who were able to control the various stages of production. This enabled some entrepreneurs to get hold of the commerce in raw materials and finished goods, and so also to concentrate production, despite the traditional guild regulation which forbade concentration of more than two looms or fullers' tubs. Several options were possible to achieve concentration. One was to intensify links with rural spinners and weavers, thereby maximising profit margins by using cheaper labour. There were, however, limits to this, because the manufacture of a luxury cloth required a lot of skilled urban labour. A second possibility lies in monopolising commercial outlets and in the general use of subcontracting.

As the account-books of the late 15th-century Bruges broker Wouter Ameide show, only a handful of cloth entrepreneurs controlled the output of woollens in the gateway-cities, and were able at the same time to control the trade in wool from the staple market to the industrial centre.⁵¹ The figures are overwhelming: in the early sixteenth century 10% of all drapers present in the gateway market of Bruges were selling over a quarter of all woollens, while some small entrepreneurs were only selling a handful of woollens, barely enough to survive. The same group of rich entrepreneurs also controlled the bulk of the wool supply. This points to the existence of elaborate systems of subcontracting: small drapers who, despite guild regulation, had become mere wage earners working for rich entrepreneurs. The drapers were not a homogeneous class of cloth entrepreneurs. Undoubtedly such polarisation was caused by the high investment necessary to acquire the expensive raw materials (wool, dyes): hence the hold on supply mechanisms was a catalyst for industrial concentration, notwithstanding the guild bans on larger workshops. Larger entrepreneurs had easier access to market systems, but they were also able to adapt in a much more flexible manner their industrial output. If and when required, they could subcontract to more or fewer craftsmen, and hence run a much smoother business.

Mechanisms of social polarisation and concentration were very important in the industrial landscape of late medieval and early modern towns. The rhetoric of guild equality proved no match for the realities of economic exchange. The possibilities at the disposal of large entrepreneurs and merchants, having access to the market for raw materials, were numerous. They could choose, depending upon the quality and the cost structure of producing industrial commodities (the relative impact of labour, raw materials and marketing), between several options. A first option was to invest in rural industries. To do this, merchants concentrated on the control of market mechanisms instead of the actual manufacture. They could also enhance the scale of an enterprise and distribute production among urban and rural manufacturers, such as happened in the Oudenaarde case. Or they could maintain the traditional urban ways of production within the guild framework of small-scale workshops and develop systems of subcontracting in order to develop advantages of scale. These entrepreneurial strategies could be chosen very pragmatically.

⁵¹ Peter Stabel, 'Entre commerce international et économie locale. Le monde financier de Wouter Ameide (Bruges fin X^e-début XVI^e siècle)', in: *Finances publiques et finances privées au bas moyen âge*, ed. Marc Boone and Walter Prevenier (Leuven/Apeldoorn, Garant eds., 1995), 75–99; Clauzel, Calonne, 'Artisanat rural', 531–573, *Recueil des documents relatifs à l'histoire de l'industrie drapière en Flandre. Deuxième partie. Le sud-Ouest de la Flandre depuis l'époque bourguignonne*, ed. Henri De Sagher, Jan De Sagher, Hans Van Werveke and Carlos Wyffels (Commission royale d'Histoire, Brussels, 1951–1965); Octave Mus, 'Wouter Ameide, een Brugs waard-makelaar op het einde van de 15de eeuw', in: *Album Albert Schouteet* (Bruges, 1973), 117–132.

5. Concluding remarks

From recent surveys of the functions of guilds in early modern Europe, one can easily acknowledge that there was no such thing as a universal guild system.⁵² Guilds could differ fundamentally from one city to another, and even within the same city there were often huge differences. The few examples of guild careers, of urban manufacture and of commercial exchange in the late medieval cities of the Low Countries clearly point to the fact that the guild system was not a monolithic system. Differences could be the result of economic organisation, political power, social polarisation and cultural prestige. Guild organised economies were capable of very flexible systems of production and exchange, a flexibility that was required by an international market and by the impact of mercantile capitalism.

This analysis clearly adds a lot of nuance to the traditional models of historical progress. Hence product innovation, possibilities for rapid increase of production, a differentiated system of manufacture, including the small commodity production described by Bob DuPlessis and Martha Howell (small-scale artisans as production units with their own means of production and small-scale labour: family and journeymen), but also various systems of economic dependence, polarisation via subcontracting, putting-out, urban–rural collaboration, existed at the same time. Depending on economic and political circumstances, the ingredients of this cocktail could be changed. Product innovation and a potential to enhance if necessary the scope of production units and productivity by adapting the organisation of the workshop to changed circumstances were paramount. Hence in the industrial and commercial cities of the Low Countries, the regulatory environment for actual production and market exchange remained very vague throughout the late middle ages, and rules and regulations were often even contradictory, more particularly about the integration of vertical and horizontal organisation of manufacture and about the integration of non-guild labour or of journeymen in production processes. Requirements of huge investment into production, especially raw materials, inevitably led to polarisation, either in the hands of merchants or of the more important entrepreneurs (in particular in the new textile industries). Guild regulation was explicit about the conditions of commercial exchange and about the relations between masters and apprentices; it was, however, very quiet about the actual organisation of the workshop, about subcontracting or various systems of putting-out. This ‘loud’ silence points to the level of flexibility required by entrepreneurs and merchants alike. Even the often very disturbed relations between manufacture in towns and in the countryside were only mere skirmishes. Guilds had never been able to stop the dialectic process of dislocation of industrial activity, even if they wanted to.

⁵² For the Low Countries: *Werelden van Verschil. Ambachtsgilden in de Lage Landen*, ed. Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly (VUB Press, Brussels, 1997), and in particular their introduction to the volume ‘Ambachtsgilden in vergelijkend perspectief: de Noordelijke en Zuidelijke Nederlanden, 15de–18de eeuw’, 11–42.

Guilds were for a long time open institutions. Numbers of entries were relatively high, and entrance fees low. Women and children had an important role in the chain of production and of exchange. In an international economy, dominated by mercantile capitalism, which wanted to increase competition to keep production costs low, such a system had to remain open. It was paramount for merchants and entrepreneurs that wages were kept relatively low, in particular during a period when there was a constant upward pressure on general wage levels. Moreover, the cost advantages of concentrating production in larger units were, except for a few specific industries such as tapestries in the Oudenaarde region, not yet important enough to endanger competitiveness. On the contrary, a subdivision of the labour market in tiny production units guaranteed competition and low prices for the merchants and those entrepreneurs who controlled the trade of raw materials and finished goods. High geographical mobility further enhances this very dynamic pattern of fragmentation. A lot of masters (and undoubtedly also many apprentices and journeymen) were coming from elsewhere, and only a minority of newcomers in the guild (mostly master's sons and people trained by close relatives) could rely on already established social networks to develop their economic and political strategies. Therefore, internal hierarchy and different social, economic and cultural backgrounds formed not only the essence of urban society as a whole, but also of the so-called closely knit social fabric within the guilds.

Often rivalry among artisans was even stimulated. Sometimes guilds were even forced to allow hierarchical entrepreneurial networks, where the labour market could be segmented even further, and the manufacture of particular goods was shifted from one guild to another. Litigation and inter-guild conflict can be analysed in such a framework. They show, much more than tight guild control and jealous defence of guild interest, the fluidity of boundaries, both for production and commerce. New guild statutes and regulation are continuous negotiations among the guilds, but also among town and regional governments and merchant organisations. But even in retail there were only a few exceptions, where guilds quickly developed into closed communities where membership was inherited and economic activity monopolised. The cliché of closed guilds does not apply to the late middle ages and the beginning of the early modern period. The complexities of the late medieval urban economy in the Low Countries did not allow this, and guild regulation never succeeded in implementing strict economic hierarchies. Guilds formed the core of a formally organised economy, and they were very efficient in making this 'economy of scarcity' more performing. But outside the formal economy, there was a wide range of other economic activities organised outside or at the margins of the corporate framework. Guild masters had to take into account these activities that were often very close to their own industrial or commercial enterprises.

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petition, concentration of capital and entrepreneurial initiatives were sacrificed to an egalitarian policy among masters larded with social exclusion, economic monopolies and political grasping. In the end, the labour market and the access to commercial circuits were monopolised by an ever-smaller group of privileged masters.

Historical research after the second world war was, for very obvious reasons, very hesitant in taking into account the various aspects of corporate life in the pre-industrial city—the issue was clearly stained by the fascist experience—and only from the 1960s onwards were scholars again paying attention to guilds.⁵ The new research pointed especially to the social, political, religious and cultural impact of corporate organisations in urban society. On the rebound, guilds were mostly treated as organisations defining social structure, cultural experiences and political dominance. New evidence pointed at the function of guilds in establishing social networks, in defining the festive culture of medieval cities and in creating the framework in which urban elites achieved political dominance.⁶ Economics was kept much in the background of research and when the economic functions were addressed, the Pirenian guild sclerosis was often invoked as an explanatory tool.⁷

And indeed much can be said for a multifaceted approach to guilds and other corporate organisations.⁸ There is no doubt that guilds in the medieval and early modern towns were certainly important in achieving political dominance or at least participation in decision-making processes.⁹ But they were also political bodies with divided loyalties and a very heterogeneous social profile. Guilds were also among the corporate bodies that organised cultural life in the cities and their public ceremonial was crucial for the many urban pageants, civic festivities and religious practices. But the craft guilds were in no way the only organisations, and in the long run not the most important ones to organise this. Perhaps most important of all, guilds were crucial for the establishment and control of social relations and social networks in the cities and for the development of group solidarity and collective identity. But they had no monopoly for all this. Other

⁵ Jean-Pierre Sosson, 'Les métiers, Normes et réalité. L'exemple des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux aux XIVe et XVe siècles', in: *Le travail au moyen âge. Une approche interdisciplinaire*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse and Colette Muraille-Samaran (Publications de l'Institut d'études médiévales, 2nd series, 10, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1990), 339–348; the classic study on the origins of guilds in the Low Countries remains Carlos Wyffels, *De oorsprong der ambachten in Vlaanderen en Brabant* (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten, Klasse der Letteren 13, Brussels, 1951).

⁶ Prevenier, Boone, 'De sociale geschiedenis'.

⁷ Herman Van der Wee, 'Industrial dynamics and the process of urbanization and de-urbanization in the Low Countries from the late middle ages to the eighteenth century. A synthesis', in: *The rise and decline of urban industries in Italy and in the Low Countries (late middle ages–early modern times)*, ed. Herman Van der Wee (Louvain, 1988), 307 ff.

⁸ Richard MacKenney, *Tradesmen and traders: the world of the guilds in Venice and Europe, 1250–1650* (Ottawa, 1987); Stephen A. Epstein, *Wage labor and guilds in medieval Europe* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991).

⁹ Marc Boone and Maarten Prak, 'Rulers, patricians, and burghers: the great and little traditions of urban revolt in the Low Countries', in: *A miracle mirrored: The Dutch Republic in European perspective*, ed. Karel Davids and Jan Lucassen (Cambridge, 1995), 99–134.

groups in society created their own formal and informal ways of forming civic identities and sociability. Moreover, organisations like the various corporate bodies or more informally organised networks often overlapped and interacted. People participated most of the time in various different, and sometimes even conflicting, social systems.¹⁰ A few examples may help to illustrate the phenomenon.

In the larger Flemish and Brabantine cities craft guilds were able, in the course of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century to gain access to considerable political power. Hence guilds were able to have real influence on the levers of economic policy. They had become powerful lobbies in the urban environment. But the question as to whether ordinary guild members were really involved in these political strategies is more difficult to answer. Extensive prosopographical research has made it abundantly clear that access to political functions was relatively easy within a system that was often built on formal division of power among the main corporate bodies, but that at the heart of the political system an often closely knit urban oligarchy successfully held on to power.¹¹ Hence membership of guilds was sometimes only an instrument for gaining access to political power for influential individuals and families often with very close ties with other, and more elitist, social networks. There is no doubt that guilds could use the strength of their numbers, but also their hold on public ceremonial and their vital role in the domain of urban supply in order to gain significant political influence. But social heterogeneity, the changing relations of political power in the city and the divided loyalties of the various guilds often prevented them from becoming efficient political institutions in the long run.

Even in late medieval Ghent, considered by many historians as one of the cities in Europe where political influence of the guilds was the greatest, the patterns of accessing political power were much more complicated than a simple assessment of the strength of each corporate organisation would suggest. Although a formal distribution of power was put in place during the fourteenth century, whereby the textile guilds (the cloth weavers), the smaller servicing guilds and the urban 'patriciate' (the often formally recognised urban elite of merchants and landowners) each got their share of political office, the realities of politics were such that a small minority was able to monopolise real political influence.¹² Moreover, members of the urban elites used the clearly identifiable institutional access of guilds to power in the city in order to penetrate the political structure. Therefore, even the alleged hold of the guilds on political power needs to be reassessed in the future: were their representatives in the urban government really

¹⁰ Endogamy within particular guilds was, for example, not a common phenomenon (Claire Dolan, 'The artisans of Aix-en-Provence in the sixteenth century: a micro-analysis of social relationships', in: *Cities and social change in early modern France*, ed. Philip Benedict (London, 1989), 174–194).

¹¹ Marc Boone, *Gent en de Bourgondische hertogen ca. 1384–ca. 1453. Een sociaal-politieke studie van een staatsvormingsproces* (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schone kunsten van België. Klasse der letteren, 133, Brussels, 1990).

¹² Prevenier, Boone, 'De sociale geschiedenis'.

efficient or even willing advocates for the interests of the corporate organisations? Guild identity was certainly important in various forms of collective action and in the eyes of the authorities some guilds were undoubtedly considered as breeding grounds for dissent and unrest.¹³ And indeed guilds were able to mobilise their members and even more to mobilise parts of urban society by means of ties of solidarity and of *esprit de corps*. But as the trend towards more oligarchic urban magistrates seems to have become inevitable in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when state authority intervened more often in urban politics, guilds stood increasingly on the sidelines of power play.¹⁴ Merchant organisations, urban elites and the central state started to interfere more directly in internal guild affairs.¹⁵

Guilds also contributed to shaping public culture in the pre-industrial cities until deep into the eighteenth century. Public pageants, cavalcades, processions, games, and even theatre and music promoted by the craft guilds, but also more private ceremonies such as funerals, dinners, and investment in works of art for the guild houses, enriched the wide spectrum of cultural life in the towns. Moreover, these often massively attended events were also important for shaping group solidarity in the guild itself. But a closer analysis of sources sheds a new light on the levels of participation by the various social groups within the guild. In particular the guild elites of governors and wealthy entrepreneurs contributed to the festive urban and guild culture: they received gifts and other tokens of honour; they got the more elaborate funerals. Ordinary masters often had to be content with the annual guild meal and the usual solidarity of their colleagues on the occasion of specific celebrations (entry into the guild, weddings, and most often funerals). The 'honour' of the guild—individual and collective—was also characterised by social distinction.¹⁶

Moreover, the guilds were certainly not the only organisations to be involved in the festive urban culture, and they lost gradually in the course of the late middle ages and the early modern period much of their lead. The so-called 'gentrification' of urban culture from the fifteenth century onwards marginalized their efforts, which were still tolerated by the urban authorities, but which were increasingly restrained within specific margins. The more 'bourgeois' corporations (shooting guilds, confraternities, rhetoricians, merchant guilds, etc.) took the lead in the beginning of the early modern period, and even they were gradually pushed aside by the

¹³ Peter Arnade, *Realms of ritual. Burgundian ceremony and civic life in late medieval Ghent* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca/London, 1996).

¹⁴ James R. Farr, *Artisans in Europe 1300–1914* (New Approaches to European History, Cambridge University Press, 2000), 164–169.

¹⁵ In the fifteenth century, the grain merchants in the market town of Aalst, for example, succeeded in securing a seat in the board of the powerful shippers' guild (Peter Stabel, 'Schipppers, wagenvoerders en kruiers. De organisatie van de stedelijke vervoerssector in het laat-middeleeuwse Vlaanderen', *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis*, 82 (1999), 160 ff.).

¹⁶ On the multiple meanings of an honourable status, see James R. Farr, *Hands of honor: artisans and their world in Dijon, 1550–1650* (Ithaca, 1988); id., 'Cultural analysis and early modern artisans', in: *The artisan and the European town, 1500–1900*, ed. Geoffrey Crossick (Aldershot, 1998), 59–60.

relentless privatisation of cultural experience in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (theatre houses, academies, salons, etc.).¹⁷

Probably the most striking function of craft guilds in the late medieval towns was their role in the creation, and of course in the control, of social networks and social relations. Guilds defined, often very strictly, the stages of human life from apprenticeship to independent entrepreneurship; they organised social hierarchies and allowed or restricted social promotion. But they never aspired to a monopoly of controlling social relations, nor were they allowed to. Even the nicely cut division of tasks in the workshops (between masters, apprentices and journeymen) must be reassessed because of growing evidence showing much more complex relations.¹⁸ Moreover, guilds functioned often in close collaboration with other solidarities and organisations in the urban fabric: neighbourhoods and urban quarters, religious communities and fraternities, informal groups that organised social and cultural life (for example the so-called carnival associations, but also more loose ensembles, such as neighbourhood charivaris), and in some regions also ethnic groups and their organisations.

2. Guild regulation, litigation and the economic infrastructure of the medieval towns

It must not be forgotten, however, that the guilds were first and foremost organisations which were intended to regulate and define industrial manufacture and commercial exchange.¹⁹ Guilds organised the framework in which production and commerce could take place. Most often in close collaboration with city councils and later on with representatives of the central government, they showed an astonishing activity of regulating exchange and production between merchants and entrepreneurs, between entrepreneurs and their workers, between retailers and consumers, between town and countryside. The analysis of guild privileges and ordinances testifies clearly to a deep concern for regulation. Moreover, seemingly

¹⁷ On the growing impact of bourgeois morality on civic cultural life in the Low Countries: Herman Pleij, *Op belofte van profijt. Stadsliteratuur en burgermoraal in de Nederlandse letterkunde van de middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam, Prometheus, 1991), 8–51.

¹⁸ Gervase Rosser, 'Crafts, guilds, and the negotiation of work in the medieval town', *Past and Present*, (1997), 154; Stephan R. Epstein, 'Craft guilds, apprenticeship, and technological change in pre-industrial Europe', *The Journal of Economic History*, 58 (1998), 684–713.

¹⁹ Research has focused on the early modern period in particular, see: *Werken volgens de regels. Ambachten in Brabant en Vlaanderen 1500–1800*, ed. Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly (VUB press, Brussels, 1994); Lis and Soly, 'Corporatisme, onderaanneming en loonarbeid. Flexibilisering en deregulering van de arbeidsmarkt in Westeuropese steden (veertiende-achttiende eeuw)', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 20, (1994), 365–390; Piet Lourens and Jan Lucassen, 'Gilden und Wanderung: die Niederlande', in: *Handwerk in Europa vom Spätmittelalter bis zur frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Knut Schulz, Elisabeth Müller-Lückner (Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien 41, Munich, 1999), 65–80. For the late medieval period, see: Wim Blockmans, 'Regionale Vielfalt im Zunftwesen in den Niederlanden vom 13. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert', *ibidem*, 51–64.

endless disputes dealing with the economic territory of specific guilds were taken before the urban and guild authorities.²⁰ Yet, are these often very hard fought over disputes so important? If one considers the amounts of energy and money invested in them, a positive answer seems obvious. Here is the evidence to support Pirenne's thesis of guild sclerosis. But do the conflicts only suggest sclerosis? Are the conflicts between the various guilds representative of the real economic relations between pre-industrial urban craftsmen and retailers?

If one takes a closer look at the realities of guild membership—and prosopographical studies are still a sad gap in guild historiography in the Low Countries—one cannot help but notice that guild membership was not yet an exclusive thing in the late medieval city and that craftsmen often belonged to several guilds at the same time. The bitter conflicts of interest between the fine leather workers and the purse-makers in fifteenth-century Bruges must certainly be reassessed when very often the same artisans are active in both sectors at the same time; or when a tanner and a butcher, or a draper and a dyer form a cartel in order to secure the supply of raw materials, and this despite repeated and unequivocal urban and guild ordinances that such cartels were strictly forbidden.²¹ Associations within the same trade were usually limited as well. Hence butchers, fishmongers, and fruit dealers were not allowed to draw lots together for a stall, and masters were most of the time not allowed to share their workshop with other entrepreneurs, but there are clear indications that various types of collaboration between artisans and retailers were the rule rather than the exception.²² Individual manufacturing and marketing strategies seem to get the advantage over guild directed rules and ordinances.

The reasons for this litigation seem to lie in the relative weight of each guild in society and in fiscal policies (because of a high number of members, because of financial strength, and social and cultural prestige). Guild regulation was often the result of harsh negotiation between the guild masters on the one hand and the urban authorities and the merchants on the other hand, and hence more a compromise than a political programme of one group. Depending on the conditions of the labour market, the requirement of product innovation and the

²⁰ Marc Boone, 'Les gens de métier à l'époque corporative à Gand et les litiges professionnels (1350–1450)', in: *Statuts individuels, statuts corporatifs et statuts judiciaires dans les villes européennes (moyen âge et temps modernes). Individual, corporate and judicial status in European cities (late middle ages and early modern period)*, ed. Marc Boone and Maarten Prak (Studies in urban social, economic and political history of the medieval and modern Low Countries, 5, Leuven/Apeldoorn, 1996), 23–48; Harald Deceulaer, 'Guilds and litigation: conflict settlement in Antwerp (1585–1796)', in: *ibid.*, 171–208.

²¹ Peter Stabel, 'Markets in the cities of the late medieval Low Countries: retail, commercial exchange and socio-cultural display', in: *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee. Secoli XIII–XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Istituto di Storia Economica F. Datini 32, Florence, 2001), 797–817.

²² Examples for early modern Italian cities in Simona Cerutti, 'Group strategies and trade strategies: the Turin tailors' guild in the late 17th and early 18th centuries', in: *Domestic strategies: work and family in France and Italy 1600–1800*, ed. S. Woolf (Cambridge, 1991), 102–147; Carlo Poni, 'Local market rules and practices: three guilds in the same line of production in early modern Bologna' in: *ibid.*, 69–101.

outlets to new (export) markets, merchants had a lot to gain from promoting the segmentation of the market or, on the contrary, the concentration of production. It is, therefore, not a surprise that in the late medieval Low Countries—a densely urbanised region dependent on the international market for textiles—guilds remained very open institutions, where social promotion was no doubt linked to social thresholds, but where often very flexible solutions could be found for tight labour markets.

The only exceptions before the sixteenth century were only those few guilds, which were involved with the urban food supply (butchers, fishmongers).²³ Here, guild identity, the use of urban space and economic activity were defined by a formal system of hereditary membership. Other examples of such closed circuits in the late medieval towns were more related to general political conditions: the shipping guilds in two Flemish towns (Ghent and Aalst, two centres of regional grain trade) were even able to make membership not only hereditary, but also to extend their transport monopoly to a substantial part of the river system in Flanders. Both guilds were very influential in urban politics as well. But, as a rule, entrepreneurs favoured a structural policy of attracting guild members. In several guilds of late medieval Bruges often more than three quarters of all new masters were either foreigners or local newcomers in the guild, only one quarter were masters' children.²⁴ This did not, of course, prevent tendencies of concentration in particular economic activities. On the contrary, those tendencies were everywhere in the urban economic organisation. Markets were subdivided; access to particular activities was mediated through particular, mostly informal, but once in a while also formally implemented systems, which favoured settled entrepreneurs. In particular Jean-Pierre Sosson in his works on the building craft in Brussels and the metal crafts in Brussels has pointed at such mechanisms. Yet such systems also existed outside the guild system and they are much more influenced by access to political influence and the ability to mobilize large amounts of capital in order to acquire markets, than they are by guild regulation and guild organisation.²⁵

Furthermore, access to the market was mediated through membership and skill of course, but also through a multitude of fiscal systems whereby non-guild members or non-town-dwellers could also participate in economic exchange by paying certain duties to the guild or the city. So despite guild regulation, it was only very

²³ Hans Van Werveke, *Ambachten en erfelijkheid* (Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten, Klasse der Letteren, 4, Brussels, 1950).

²⁴ Peter Stabel, 'Apprentices and the city: social and economic aspects of apprenticeship', in: *Apprenticeship in Europe (Middle ages—20th century)*, ed. Hugo Soly, Laurence Kaplan and Marc Jacobs (in press).

²⁵ Jean-Pierre Sosson, 'Quelques aspects sociaux de l'artisanat bruxellois du métal (1360–1500)', *Cahiers bruxellois. Revue trimestrielle d'histoire urbaine*, 6 (1961), 98–122; id., *Les travaux publics de la ville de Bruges XIVe-Xve siècles* (Brussels, 1977). See also the more general remarks in Willem P. Blockmans, G. Pieters, Walter Prevenier and Remy W.M. Van Schaik, 'Tussen crisis en welvaart, sociale veranderingen 1300–1500', in: *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 4 (Bussum, 1980), 42–60.

rarely a strict monopoly of burghers or of guild members, not even in those retailing guilds, which were most strict in their regulation. If foreigners were tolerated in the production and retailing system, however, they usually had to stand on specific spots on the market or they had to wait until noon before they were allowed to buy. In other sectors non-burghers could only trade in large quantities, leaving the smaller quantities and thereby the actual retailing to burghers. The same restrictions were valid for guild-membership. In order to participate in market transactions, craftsmen and retailers had to be guild members, but exceptions were the rule. Non-guild-members were often allowed to join market activity, or to be integrated in manufacturing strategies of recognised entrepreneurs, when they paid a tax to the guild in question and contributed in the guild's efforts of controlling market exchange. In other cases, there were strict limitations about the conditions of manufacture and trade. Only at a later stage, in the course of the sixteenth century, but for most guilds only during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, other segments of the guild system than the urban supply became increasingly closed to newcomers, mainly because of increasingly high entrance fees. This trend towards greater exclusiveness (of mastership) coincided also with a much tougher moral interpretation of guild restrictions. Hence associations of journeymen and the place of women and children as workers (both inside and outside the family workshop) came under closer scrutiny.²⁶ Financial, social and moral thresholds were erected in order to regulate every aspect of the members' social and economic activities.²⁷ A side effect of these policies was further market segmentation while at the same time the labour market was shielded from undesired competition.

Individual and collective merchant and entrepreneurial strategies can explain the open structures of late medieval guilds. Merchants stood to gain a lot from enhanced competition between many small commodity producers while the guilds and their controlling mechanisms were nonetheless able to force those producers to stand by the necessary standard quality of export commodities. Further research into entrepreneurial networks needs to be undertaken in the near future, but the involvement of merchants in textile production in some smaller centres proves that they understood the usefulness of guild structures as negotiating partners while

²⁶ Martha Howell, *Women, production, and patriarchy in late medieval cities* (Chicago, 1986).

²⁷ Xavier Rousseaux, 'Sozialdisziplinierung, Civilisation des mœurs et monopolisation du pouvoir. Eléments pour une histoire du contrôle social dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux 1500–1815', in: *Institutionen, instrumente und akteure sozialer Kontrolle und Disziplinierung in frühneuzeitlichen Europa*, ed. Heinz Schilling and Lars Behrisch (Frankfurt, 1999), 251–274; Merry Wiesner, 'The religious dimensions of guild notions of honor in Reformation Germany', in: *Ehrkonzepte in der Frühen Neuzeit. Identitäten und abgrenzungen*, ed. S. Backmann, H.J. Künast, S. Ullmann and B.A. Tlusty (Institut für europäische Kulturgeschichte der Universität Augsburg, Colloquia Augustana, 8, Berlin, 1988), 223–233; Robert Muchembled, *L'invention de l'homme moderne : sensibilités, mœurs et comportements collectifs sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 1988), 136 and the bibliographical survey in Farr, *Artisans*, 156–158. The Bruges producers of rosaries were among the first to stress the moral implications of guild life: Jean A. Van Houtte, 'Ambernijverheid en paternostermakers te Brugge gedurende de 14e en 15e eeuw', *Handelingen van het Genootschap voor Geschiedenis te Brugge, Société d'Emulation*, 82 (1939), 149–184.

Naivasha 'vampire' to be charged with murder

the-star.co.ke

By WANJIRU MACHARIA

Mar. 05, 2016, 5:00 am



Geoffrey Matheri alias Fongo at Naivasha Law courts in November 10, 2011 .Photo/file

The Naivasha self-confessed vampire has a murder case to answer, the High Court in Nakuru ruled on Friday.

Judge Maureen Odero said Geoffrey Matheri, alias Fongo, will be charged.

Matheri is accused of stabbing and sucking the blood of Miriam Wairimu on August 29, 2008, before killing her and burying her in his house.

Matheri is serving a sentence at the Naivasha Maximum Prison for kidnapping and torturing women, while extracting their blood, which he

drunk.

He is also accused of raping his victims, eating flesh of dead victims as other hostages watched.

Matheri was arrested in Naivasha's Kihoto estate in September 2008.

He led police where two emaciated women, Esther Akinyi and Naomi Wanjiru, were rescued.

Police also found a shallow grave where Wairimu's remains were buried.

Wanjiru said Matheri drained her blood into a metallic cup and drunk it with Wairimu's flesh.

Akinyi said she saw Matheri rape one of the hostages.

The case will be heard on April 1.

Corporal Reuben Manyara presented pictures of a body exhumed from the grave.

Thank you for participating in discussions on The Star, Kenya. Note that:

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Naples celebrates pizza trademark

2010/02/04 23:45:15

bbc.co.uk

Page last updated at 23:45 GMT, Thursday, 4 February 2010

Naples pizza makers celebrate EU trademark status



File pic of pizza maker in Naples

Neapolitan pizza is now officially part of Europe's food heritage

Naples has celebrated the first day of official recognition for the Italian city's most famous culinary creation: the pizza.

The European Union ruling marks the end of a battle that began a quarter of a century ago and aimed to protect Neapolitan pizzas from imitations.

The Traditional Speciality Guaranteed label on Naples pizza was approved last month and came into effect on Thursday.

The pizza makers' association head said the trademark was a great honour.

The EU's agriculture commissioner said Neapolitan pizza was now part of Europe's food heritage.

HAVE YOUR SAY

I've never had better pizza and ice cream than in Naples. Bellissimo!

The TSG label means that all pizzerias aspiring to supply the real thing are in future supposed to be vetted by a special commission that will check standards.

They include using only San Marzano tomatoes and fresh buffalo mozzarella cheese.

The Italian farmers' association says that half of Italy's 25,000 pizzerias currently use the wrong ingredients, such as East European cheese or Ukrainian flour.

Italy now tops the EU chart for products that are protected - it has 180, more than Spain or France.

Protected status enables producers to not only boast about their exclusivity, but also charge a premium.

And now pizza makers from Naples will get their slice of the action.



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Nazi Forest Swastikas: Fact or Tabloid Fodder?

oddlyhistorical.com



DDLY
HISTORICAL



"Swastikatree" by © Reuters, November 2000. Duplicated across a number of news sites, see references of article.. Licensed under Fair use of copyrighted material in the context of Forest swastika via Wikipedia – <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Swasti>

Supermarket tabloids are entertaining, if only for how absurd they are. From Elvis and Bigfoot partying it up on Venus to allegations of presidential

homosexuality, there isn't a limit to how absurd tabloid rags can get. That is why I initially dismissed the story of the forest swastikas. I recall seeing the alleged swastika plastered across the front page of a tabloid when I was a kid. While I probably believed it at the time—it was on paper, after all, they couldn't lie in a paper!—as time went on I grew a lot more skeptical. So when I was sitting down to come up with ideas for the site, I went ahead and wrote it down, fully expecting to find that it was nothing more than a National Enquirer editor's attempt to grab headlines.

Much to my surprise, it turns out that there is more fact to the story than I expected.

Hate in the forest

The first time anyone noticed a swastika in the forest was in 1992. An intern at a local landscaping company in the Uckermark region of northeastern Germany was reviewing aerial photographs looking for irrigation lines when, much to his shock, he noticed a giant yellow swastika in one of the photos. The symbol of hate was comprised of 140 larch trees, which had been planted in the middle of a forest of pines. The tree's leaves turn yellow in the fall, making a striking contrast to the surrounding pines. However, the swastika was only visible from a certain height, which explained in part why it had gone unseen for close to sixty years—airliners flew too high to be able to see it, and Communist East Germany banned private aircraft who were more likely to be flying at the correct altitude to see the swastika.

Samples taken from trees in the sinister formation dated it to the late 1930s. No one is exactly certain how they got there. A local farmer claimed he'd planted the stands as a child, while locals claimed that the symbol was installed as a sign to authorities that local villages were loyal to the Nazi regime. Another report said that a local Nazi official had the trees planted to commemorate Hitler's birthday.

Whatever its origins, the leafy swastika was a reminder of the darkest time in German history, and many wanted it gone. Forestry workers cut down 40 of the trees, hoping that would make the symbol unrecognizable. It was five years before anyone took another look, and they saw a swastika there plain as day. In 2000, workers took to the heath once more, culling 25 strategically chosen trees and destroying the swastika for good.

A swastika planting fad

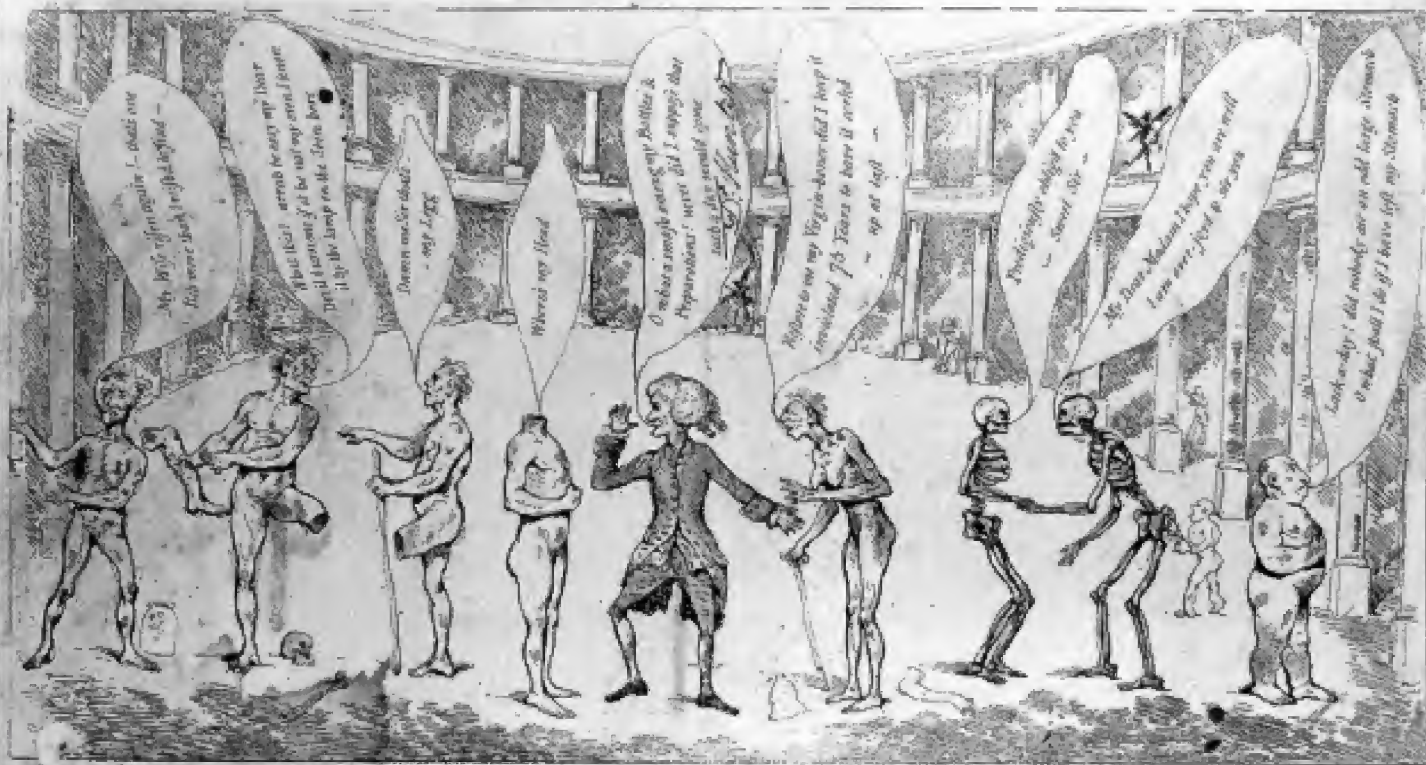
It turns out that planting swastika groves was something of a fad among Nazi foresters in the 1930 (Nazi foresters? Who knew?) US troops reported a giant swastika formed out of larches on a hillside in the state of Hesse (which is also the state where Frankenstein's Castle is located). A second forest swastika was found in Hesse in the 1980s, while a swastika comprised of Douglas firs was discovered in a deciduous forest in Wiesbaden.

Bizarrely, a forest swastika was found in a remote part of Kyrgystan as well. No one knows who planted the stand of trees. Some say it was an exiled Nazi forestry service official, while others claim it was the work of German POWs.

Kringiel, Danny. "Horticultural Hate: The Mystery of the Forest Swastikas." Spiegel.de. July 5, 2013. Spiegel Online. May 25, 2014 <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/mystery-of-nazi-swastikas-in-the-forests-a-909726.html>

This entry was posted in Strange Structures and tagged forest swastikas, Nazis, swastikas, World War II on June 25, 2014 by Andrew Kincaid.

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THE RESURRECTION
or an *Internal View* of the Museum in Wind-mill Street, on the last Day

Printed at the Author's Hall "87 1812 by B. Thompson 31 at New Street Street

The Great Migration: Creating a New Black Identity in Los Angeles [kcet.org](http://www.kcet.org)



Charlotta Bass, publisher & editor of the first Black newspaper in Los Angeles, The Eagle, receives declaration. ca. 1949

The Great Migration: Creating a New Black Identity in Los Angeles

By Kelly Simpson |
February 15, 2012

In honor of Black History Month, this is the first in a three part series exploring the shifting Black communities of Los Angeles. Read part 2 [here](#) and part 3 [here](#).

The Great Migration of the 1920s that saw major populations of the Black South move to Northern cities like

Detroit, Chicago and New York largely bypassed Los Angeles. It was instead what scholars refer to as "The Second Great Migration" in the 1940s that made the most significant shifts in the city. As World War II commenced, defense production skyrocketed in Los Angeles with more than \$11 billion in war contracts, which called for labor in the automobile, rubber and steel industries. Black Americans migrated West in response and the Black population in Los Angeles leaped from 63,700 in 1940 to 763,000 in 1970, making the once small-pocketed community visible to the general public.

Before this grand shift, the Black community in Los Angeles had been rooted in a more complex Black identity with Mexicans of mixed-African descent. By 1821, Mexico abolished slaves as part of the Trans-Atlantic trade and thus were allowed to assimilate earlier into a society that later became America following the Mexican-American War. The Black community in Los Angeles then grew from a successive stream of small migrations, beginning in 1848 with the California Gold Rush during which more than 5,000 Blacks made their way to California by 1860.

Between the 1890s and 1910, large groups of Black Americans migrated to Los Angeles from Texas, Shreveport, New Orleans and Atlanta to escape the racial violence and bigotry of the South with hopes for better access to wealth. Job opportunities were plentiful, including hauling lumber, digging ditches, cleaning toilets, laying brick, scrubbing laundry and shining shoes. Black migrants quickly laid claim to Central Avenue between 8th and 20th Streets in Downtown Los Angeles, and the area became known as "Brick Block" - with clubs, churches black-owned businesses and newspapers like the *California Eagle* supplying community needs.

By the time the Second Great Migration occurred, the prewar Black population that had founded its community's vital institutions grew closer to middle-class status. Homeownership amongst Blacks in Los Angeles by 1910 reached over 36% - the highest rate in the nation. L.A.'s prewar Black community viewed these "great" migrations with uncertainty. Some



Charlotta Bass, publisher & editor of the first Black newspaper in Los Angeles, The Eagle, receives declaration. ca. 1949

valued the opportunity for black families to reconnect and welcomed the new migrants as a chance to advance the race or as potential new business for their personal ventures. While others saw the influx as a threat to the peace their small existence afforded. Blacks had been in Los Angeles for nearly a century by the Second Great Migration, yet their population in contrast to the Latino and Asian population was miniscule.

Meanwhile, on the westside, another small-pocketed Black community was forged from the vision of developer and tobacco mogul, Abbot Kinney. Black Americans migrated west at the turn of the century to build the Venice canal system. They worked long hours digging ditches and dredging earth against a fast-approaching deadline, while storms flooded the area in March of that year. They finished in time for the July 04, 1905 opening. Subsequently, Blacks settled nearby in Oakwood, a 1.1 square mile community set aside for them. Of the better-known migrants from that generation was Kinney's confidante and driver, Irving Tabor, whose name is commemorated today on an alley street one block east of Abbot Kinney Boulevard in Venice.

When Kinney died in 1920, he left his private residence to the Tabor family. Navalette Tabor Bailey, one of the last remaining residents from that migration wave, passed away in 2010. Before she died, Bailey recounted her earlier days in the Oakwood as a Louisiana migrant. Below she describes the freedom Blacks experienced in the West during the 1920s:

With this influx in the Black population, housing became more and more scarce, overwhelming the already established communities and providing opportunities for real estate developers. Davenport Builders for instance, was a large developer that responded to the demand, with eyes on undeveloped land in Compton. What was once an all-white neighborhood in the 1940s quickly became an African American, middle-class dream where blue-collar laborers could enjoy suburbia away from the slums. These new housing developments provided better ways of life with more space for families to grow and live healthy.

Marie Hollis, an early Black homeowner in the Compton community, moved to Compton in the 1960s with her husband and small child. At that time other Black families were few and far between. In the video below, Hollis describes the quiet and spacious lifestyle Compton afforded for her family:

This heyday of peaceful living, ownership, and pride in the Black community eventually faded as the influx of Blacks in Los Angeles threatened the perceived value of property for Caucasian homeowners. Racially restrictive covenants would soon become widespread and condense the growing Black population to South Los Angeles, and in that density grew gang violence, crime, and one of the most severe riots in the city's history.

Top: Photo from Shades of L.A. Collection, courtesy Los Angeles Public Library.

KCETLink, formerly Community Television of Southern California, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. © 2015 - KCETLink

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New dogman reports in Ontario and New Jersey

lindagodfrey.com

December 21, 2015 by lindagodfrey



One witness described the creature he saw as resembling those in the movie, "Dog Soldiers."

Two detailed and interesting dogman reports showed up in my e-mail this past week; one from New Jersey and another just a couple of hundred miles north of that near Bancroft, Ontario. Both occurred in 2015. They're also both quite lengthy and the submitters asked me to withhold their names. I am still communicating with the writers about certain usual questions, but here are (still subject to change) my somewhat abbreviated versions of their reports:

The Weird Wolfman of Worthington State Park, New Jersey

A 55-year old man who works as a physical therapist, does not drink and says he has never had paranormal experiences decided to walk his malamute dog in Worthington State Park on August 23, 2015 at about 12:30 am on a bright night. The weather had been too humid and warm for the dog in the daytime, he said, and they had set off on a pleasant park trail with no problem viewing their

surroundings.

Suddenly he spotted something strange as they neared a pond. There were two figures; one lying on the ground and the other crouching over it. As he watched, the crouched figure rose onto its hind feet. He quickly pegged the prone figure as a dead deer, but squinted at the now upright beast to identify it. He quickly ruled out another deer or a bear. Its large head featured tall, pointed ears and a long muzzle, and he described its torso and upper legs as "densely muscular," with a thin waist. "I was an avid bodybuilder for years," he said. "The creature's physique resembled a 'roid-rat,' as we called them."

He also noticed that it walked on its toe pads as a canine does, and estimated the creature weighed something over 200 pounds and stood at between six and seven feet tall. He noted that the creature seemed poised and balanced on its hind legs, "as if to step over the deer and deliberately, adroitly, attack."

The well-trained malamute had been sniffing intently as it waited for a cue from its owner, and did not quibble when the man backed carefully away until they reached a spot where they could safely run to the car.

"The creature is out there!" he wrote. "I do not know what I saw as far as an exact species, but I absolutely know it is something that is not recognized by professional zoology. Again, it was real but also surreal at the same time." He did not notify park authorities, and now walks his dog near home.

Odd Ontario Canine

A man who went fishing for brook trout alone on the night of July 7th, 2015 near Bancroft, Ontario, found much more than he bargained for as he returned to his cabin via a gravel road. It was light enough out that he could see fifty feet ahead of him even without his truck headlamps on when he saw what he thought was a person standing in the middle of the road about 20 feet away. He slowed down and flicked his four roof lights on.

"It was a creature about seven feet tall, black with greyish-silver parts, hunched over with a dead rabbit in its hands," he wrote. "Yes, hands with fingers and claws as far as I could tell. Its feet seemed to be bent backwards. It turned its head and shoulders and looked right at me. I could see its yellow eye shine." [Typical for canine eyes, I might add.]

He could also hear it growling at him in a "low, low" tone that made the hair stand up on his neck, and at that point stomped on the gas in panic, half-bracing for impact and closing his eyes for a brief second. The creature either jumped to the ditch or laid down to let the truck, which rides 22 inches off the ground, roll over it. The man saw nothing in the rear view mirrors, however, and just kept going. He compared the creature to those in the movie, Dog Soldiers. But the episode was not over.

He made it safely back to his cabin and sat down trying to calm himself, when he heard something large walking around outside his cabin. He thought there may have even been two of them but wasn't sure. He had a cell phone but did not have signal coverage. He did have the presence of mind to put it on camera setting and then aimed it through the slats of his window shutters. It took 3 photos of something that admittedly looks like a shadowy, dog-shaped head. I am awaiting permission from him to share those pictures.

After spending a long, anxious night, near dawn he finally thought of turning on his vehicle alarm from inside the cabin in hopes it might scare the creature away. As the alarm beeped, he made a mad dash for the truck, jumped in and drove for home, a five-hour-plus trip. He says he still has bad dreams about it.

Many thanks to both of these witnesses for sharing their experiences!

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New Haven man seriously hurt in hit and run; driver described as having 'vampire teeth'

By Wes Duplantier, for New Haven Register

POSTED: 03/07/16, 7:38 AM EST • UPDATED: 13 HRS AGO • 3 COMMENTS

<http://www.nhregister.com/general-news/20160307/new-haven-man-seriously-hurt-in-hit-and-run-driver-described-as-having-vampire-teeth>

Grand Avenue was shut down for several hours early Monday between Ferry and Poplar streets after one person was seriously hurt in a hit-and-run crash. Wes Duplantier — New Haven Register

NEW HAVEN >> A New Haven man was rushed to the hospital and police were searching for a suspect after a hit-and-run crash early Monday in Fair Haven.

The man, 54, suffered head and body trauma, along with a shattered leg, when he was hit shortly after midnight on Grand Avenue between Poplar and Ferry streets, police spokesman Officer David Hartman said in a press release later Monday.

Hartman said the man had been crossing Grand Avenue from west to east when he was hit by a white 1999 or 2000 Honda Accord coupe. Witnesses told police the car had run into a tree before hitting the man.

The driver of the Honda did not stop and instead fled west on Grand Avenue.

Police at the scene said the New Haven man's injuries were considered life-threatening, but by 5 a.m. he was in "very serious" but stable condition, police said.

Grand Avenue was completely shut down between Poplar and Ferry streets until about 5:15 a.m., as investigators gathered evidence from the accident.

Police found broken safety glass at the accident scene. The car had tinted windows and likely has damage to its windshield or passenger side window, Hartman said.

Hartman said one witness described the driver as being like "a wolverine," of short and stocky build with "vampire teeth." The driver reportedly wore a white shirt, jeans and white sneakers. It was not clear how the witness saw the driver's pants or shoes.

The Honda driver remained at large late Monday morning. Hartman said if he is apprehended he will face charges for leaving the scene of a crash.

Anyone with information about the incident can reach police by calling 203-946-6316.

COMMENTS (3)

Lady Krampus • 3 minutes ago • Someone call Prof. X

homunculus_B • 7 hours ago • Agents Mulder and Scully en route.

tony6269 homunculus_B • 7 hours ago • No Van Helsing ?

Haunting images of abandoned New Jersey jail used to film Malcolm X

07:30 EST, 1 March 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Haunting images of abandoned New Jersey jail used in the film Malcolm X daubed in graffiti more than 40 years after the last inmate was removed

- **Photographer Will Ellis, 26, visited the Essex County Jail in New Jersey as part of his latest picture project**
- **The prison, which was built in 1837 was abandoned in 1970, and was used as a set in the 1991 movie Malcolm X**
- **Since then, the prison has been taken over by drug addicts and drug dealers happy to live in the abandoned cells**
- **The jail is the oldest building in Essex County and was designed by renowned British architect John Haviland**

By Darren Boyle for MailOnline

These are the haunting images of an abandoned jail in New Jersey which was used as a location for the film Malcolm X featuring Denzel Washington.

The Essex County Jail, which was first opened in 1837, is the oldest building in the area, but is slowly crumbling away because of continued neglect.

The last inmates were removed from the building in 1970, but it was used in the 1991 movie Malcolm X.



Photographer Will Ellis visited the abandoned jail for his latest picture project.

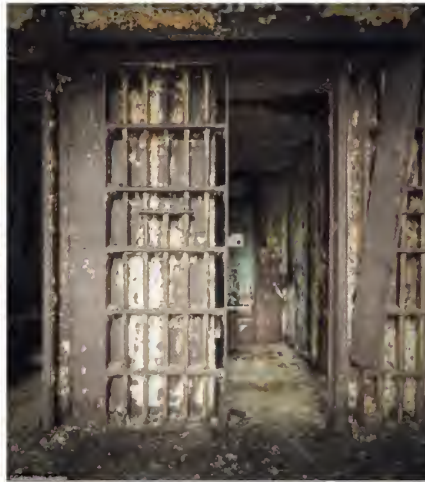
Ellis, 26, said: 'The place is completely overgrown, so you really can't get a good look at the building from the outside, and half of it is in ruins.'

'But when you first enter the cell block, it's breath-taking.'

Essex County was designed by British architect John Haviland - who also designed the renowned Eastern State Penitentiary.

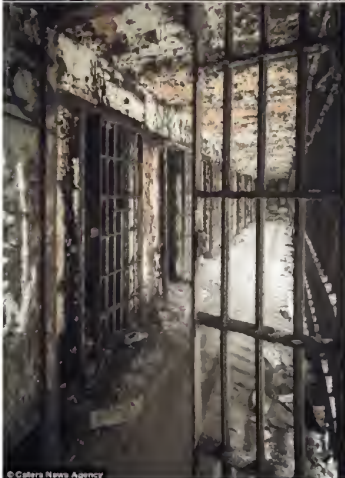
The jail - which was also known as the Newark Street Jail - is the oldest building in the county, and was once used to shoot scenes in the 1991 movie Malcolm X, which starred Denzel Washington.

A fire broke out in the abandoned jail around 10 years later, and today it is a location for squatters and drug dealers.



Ellis added: 'You could immediately tell the place was inhabited, and most of the cells had evidence of squatters - clothing, junk food wrappers and garbage.'

'I was inside for several hours and I did run into



several men who were living there, for the most part they were friendly and respectful.

'I can understand why a place like this would be more attractive to someone in their situation than living on the streets or the shelter system - here, at least, they have some degree of privacy and freedom, and a space they can call their own.

'For me it's also about capturing the mood and spirit of the place.

'That mysterious atmosphere is what initially drew me to these buildings, and that's ultimately what people are responding to.

'Once I draw people in with the visuals, they'll usually stick around long enough to hear a bit more about the history, which is often just as compelling.

'In a place like this, I want to tell the story of the structure itself, as well as the people who lived within it.'

Comments (9)

jszerk, Ridgefield, United States, about 2 hours ago



Living
in
jersey I
find it
cool
seeing
graffiti I



recognize in
pictures
featured
here in This
article lol

Witzelsucht,
Los
Angeles,
United
States,
about 2
hours ago

It looks like
a scary

place full of bad vibes.

nonreligiousperson, wellington
nz, about 2 hours ago

looks like a fitting home for
those in Guantanamo prison,
and maybe a few of the
migrants wanting to come to the
good old usa

Miss Ann Thorpe, Redneck
Riviera, United States, about 6
hours ago



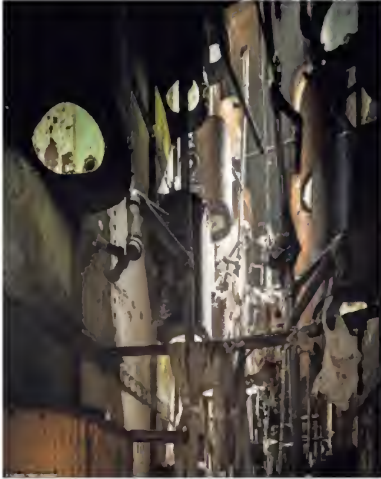
Living in Newark is a prison sentence.

RobertG, Rockville, United States, about 14 hours ago

Good place to store refugees.

P_L, Boston-MA-USA, about 15 hours ago

"is the oldest building in the county" ?? I can't believe there is any county on the East coast of the USA in



which the oldest building was built in 1837. It was otherwise an interesting story. If they had re-purposed this building in 1970, it could have made an amazing hotel, office or condominium. But now, with all that crumbling brickwork, I wonder if they can safely save it.

NJphoto, Newark-NJ, United States, about 8 hours ago

Do you have any idea what was going on in Newark during 1970? Re-purposing a building would have been the last thing on city officials minds at the time. Newark was burning (literally) in 1970, reeling from the riots and turmoil of the 60's, the city was in shambles and disarray with more riots on the horizon.

jszerk, Ridgefield, United States, about 2 hours ago

It's the oldest building in the County not COUNTRY. As in the oldest in Essex county New Jersey. There are so many older building in New Jersey alone much less the whole east coast make sure you read thoroughly. Lol

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New Theory in 'Boy in the Box' Cold Case

By Mitch Blacher

Published at 5:41 PM EST on Mar 2, 2016

nbcphiladelphia.com



NBC 10 Philadelphia

Two authors tell the NBC10 Investigators they believe they've solved one of Philadelphia's oldest and most notorious cold cases.

On February 25, 1957 police discovered a young boy beaten, stuffed in a cardboard box and abandoned in the woods in the city's Fox Chase neighborhood.

The boy was dubbed "the boy in the box." Today his grave reads "America's Unknown Child."

The details of the cold case chilled Philadelphia. Putting a name on the boy's grave is something that frustrated generations of police investigators.

"To put a name on the child's grave and to solve the case, it's the ultimate in police work," Philadelphia Police Sergeant Bob Kuhlmeier said.

Kuhlmeier is the third generation of Philadelphia police detectives to lead the case.

In 1998, police exhumed the boy's body and took a DNA sample from a remaining tooth.

The two authors – one from Los Angeles, and another from outside New York, say they believe they've traced the boy's family to Memphis, Tennessee and need his DNA to prove it.

While researching separate books, they say they've paired two tips together: one from a woman claiming her mother bought and killed the boy; the other from a Philadelphia man who told the authors his family rented a home to a man who sold his son.

They took a DNA sample from who they believe to be the boy's brother.

"The only way I'm going to find out if it's the child is with the DNA evidence. Scientific evidence," New Jersey based author Lou Romano said.

"It makes the most sense when you look at all the facts," Los Angeles based author Jim Hoffman said.

Dr. Greg McDonald reviewed pictures of the boy, his potential brother and potential father.

McDonald is Philadelphia's former assistant medical examiner and the current Montgomery County deputy medical examiner.

He said forensic experts will use pictures to judge if further laboratory analysis is required.

"There are some similarities to these pictures," McDonald said. "Enough similarities that I think it's worth further investigation through further laboratory tests."

Dr. McDonald said the three men appear to share traits that could point to a genetic match.

Sgt. Kuhlmeier and his colleagues worked 280 homicides in 2015. He said they have to work fresh cases first leaving little time to chase leads in a 59 year old cold case. He called the author's tip "average" and said before comparing any DNA police would need to confirm the timeline that led the authors to their conclusions.

"We're going to investigate further is what we're going to do," Kuhlmeier said.

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Norwegian police trawl for goldfish owner

yahoo.com

March 6, 2016 3:20 PM

AP

Associated Press



In this photo provided by the Norwegian police, a goldfish swims inside a jar, at the police station in Bodo, northern Norway, Sunday, March 6, 2016. Police in the northwestern town of Bodo are holding a lost goldfish in a jam jar hoping to find its rightful owner, according to Norwegian news agency NTB. NTB says officers found the goldfish, Sunday, at the Nordlandshall indoor soccer stadium and decided to take it back to the police station as they couldn't find the owner. (Norwegian Police/NTB scanpix via AP) NORWAY OUT

HELSINKI (AP) — For one goldfish in Norway, it's almost like being a fish out of water.

The goldfish in question is being held at a police station in the northwestern town of Bodo while officers try to track down its owner, according to Norwegian news agency NTB.

NTB says officers found the goldfish in a jam jar at the Nordlandshall indoor soccer stadium and decided to take it back to the police station because they couldn't find the owner.

Ina Selfors, spokeswoman for the Nordland police district, told NTB that somebody likely had bought the goldfish and taken it to the stadium and forgot it there.

Selfors says she hopes the owner will contact them, adding that until then the fish "will stay in the jam jar and keep us company."

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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Norwich Castle reveals spells, potions, charms and ritual marks hidden in homes across Norfolk

edp24.co.uk

18:02 25 February 2016

Rowan Mantell



A horse skull.

A secret world of magic, where mummified cats, bent pins, ancient symbols and patched shoes fight the forces of evil, will be uncovered at Norwich Castle this spring.

<http://edp24.co.uk/1.4433725>

And now, for the finishing touches to your lovely new home. Furniture, curtains, artworks, a bottle full of urine, human hair and nails.

Today we use locks, burglar alarms and timer-set lighting to protect our homes, but 300 years ago householders were not just worried about human intruders. They believed their homes were also at risk from supernatural forces – evil spirits, ill luck, ghosts and witches.

And so they buried magic charms in doorways, hid spells up chimneys and beneath fireplaces and protected roof spaces with dead animals.

Anywhere evil might enter a building, in a world beset by disease, failed harvests, disastrous fires and unexplained deaths, strong magic was needed.



The brick with magical symbols found at Earlham Hall, Norwich.



A witch bottle found in Bury St Edmunds, containing the remains of rusty iron objects.

Hethersett, near Norwich, a bottle with iron pins and nails was buried beneath a cottage fireplace. A dead cat was concealed in a room in King's Lynn, a horse skull was hidden under the doorstep of a house in Thuxton, near Dereham, and a jar of urine, human hair and nails was unearthed in King Street,

Norwich.

These spells against supernatural harm were buried, bricked into walls, built into roof spaces, and experts in the beliefs behind the hidden charms say secrecy was part of their power to protect against demons, witches and curses.

Today witch bottles and mummified animals are still discovered during renovations and demolitions, and in April historians who specialise in this world of protective spells against the powers of darkness which seemed all too real to our ancestors will meet at Norwich Castle.

The practice of trying to turn away evil with magic charms and potions is called *apotropaia* and was common for centuries. In Britain it was particularly prevalent during the peak period of the witch trials in the 16th and 17th centuries, but was still seen into the 20th century.



A 16th-century Bellarmine jar found on the site of The Forum in Norwich.

Brian Hoggard, a historian who researches folk magic and runs a website called *Apotropaia*, is helping organise the conference to explore topics including the purpose of buried bottles, the practice of concealing shoes to repel evil, and the use of ritual protection marks and hidden charms across Britain and further afield.

"We chose Norwich because there's a huge amount of these objects in East Anglia," said Brian.

He has been interested in archaeology from his teens and studied the history of witchcraft as part of his history degree.

"When I finished my degree I thought it would be exciting to start a research project to try and get a sense of the distribution and extent of the folk magic practices," said Brian. "That was back in 1999 so I've gathered an enormous amount of information since then."

"Buildings from the lowest to the highest have been shown to contain these protective measures. One of our conference speakers, James Wright, will be talking about marks which have been found in high status buildings including the Tower of London. Homes, businesses, churches, grand houses - all seem to have been in need of protection."



The Red Cat of the Red Cat Hotel in North Wootton.

The magic came in the form of potions including iron pins and nails (of which witches and bad fairies were known to be frightened), animals believed to have special powers, and spells written in words on rolls of paper, or scratched in pictures and diagrams on walls.

Perhaps the most common hidden charms of all were old shoes – almost always patched and repaired, usually single, often a child's. This superstition dates back at least as far as the 14th century when Buckinghamshire rector, and unofficial English saint, John Schorn is said to have trapped the devil in a boot (and which is depicted on several Norfolk rood screens).

More than 1,200 examples have been recorded with one of the earliest found so far hidden in Winchester Cathedral in 1308. And the practise survived into the 20th century. "Modern shoes are fairly regularly encountered during repairs and maintenance. I

had an example of a Nike trainer being found in the roof of a central London bank, deliberately placed," said Brian.

In homes they were often placed on a ledge inside a chimney where it was thought they would trap bad spirits.

Hidden charms are generally found at entry and exit points, including the hearth which would have been open to the sky – and any supernatural harm circling the house, trying to gain access.

"Some houses have shoes, bottles, marks and cats all from the same period so it's clear there that there was a strong urge to protect," said Brian. Others have been found with many layers of protection. Three witch-bottles were found mortared into the hearth of a grand house in Essex at a time when the mistress is known to have been very ill. "Presumably it was believed she was bewitched," said Brian.

Dead cats are another common find, sometimes positioned as if they are hunting. They were believed to have a sixth sense and might have been hidden, perhaps as a sacrifice to ward off bad luck and black magic.

Witch bottles are usually found beneath hearths or front-doors, but have also been uncovered from beneath floors and inside walls.

Around 200 have been recorded in England, dating back to the 16th century. More than half are grey stoneware bottles and jars called bellarmine, decorated with the faces of grim-looking bearded men. They were filled with the ingredients including iron pins and nails, human hair, urine, and sometimes small bones, thorns, pieces of wood and heart-shaped scraps of fabric.

Many hidden charms will still be concealed in homes and other buildings and people keen to search for magic charms in their own houses should try under floorboards or above lintels near doors, in walls and roofs, and around hearths and chimneys. "Buildings from the 17th and 18th century frequently are found to contain hidden charms," said Brian. "By their very nature, these charms are concealed so we only find them by luck or during repairs or demolition. Many will have vanished without trace into builders skips or the antiques trade so they may have been far more common than we can imagine.

"Objects such as witch-bottles, dried cats, concealed shoes, horse skulls and written charms - amongst others - have all been found in buildings in East Anglia. These are mainly found during demolition, restoration or sometimes just by exploring the nooks and crannies of a building."

And simply shining the beam of a torch obliquely across hearths or door lintels could reveal ritual marks carved into the stone.

"Most of the things we'll be talking about were concealed within buildings or utilise some kind of symbol magic," said Brian. "The secrecy was a powerful part of their defensive qualities."

Secrecy and mystery still surrounds many of the hidden charms, even after they are discovered. Unlike superstitions such as up-turned horseshoes, which are displayed openly, it was thought that this magic lost its potency if uncovered and Brian said that even modern-day householders often don't want items removed or even discussed – perhaps because a vestige of those old beliefs still remains.

"Very often we find that extremely sensible, non-superstitious and professional people, will suddenly become very superstitious and acutely tuned-in to the supernatural when they find these objects in their home," he said. "One home-owner I worked with on a witch-bottle refused to allow the contents to be examined and insisted that the bottle be re-buried with a small ritual including myself and some nuns. Others have insisted that concealed shoes are returned to their find-spot and that cats be re-concealed. Personally, I am always very respectful when handling these objects and generally recommend that the objects be properly documented and photographed before being placed back into the building. Occasionally people wish to donate the objects to local museums or have them on display in their homes

behind glass.”

The inaugural national Apotropaia conference, at Norwich Castle, is aimed at anyone with an interest in the subject, from academics to amateurs.

Shining the light of research on the spells, potions, charms and ritual marks hidden in homes across the county, country and even further afield, the conference will reveal some of our ancestors’ darkest fears and deepest secrets.

• Hidden Charms, a conference exploring the magical protection of buildings, will be held in the Town Close Auditorium, Norwich Castle, from 9.30am to 5.30pm on Saturday, April 2. Tickets are £30 in advance or £35 on the door. For more information contact Brian Hoggard by calling 07720 211002 or emailing brianhoggard@ymail.com

1 comment

- Perhaps they could lend us some to bury beneath the pitch at Carrow Road... Seriously, that was a fascinating article I enjoyed reading. It's amazing what you find when you tank out a cellar from an 1849 cottage in Coltishall - clay pipes, tankard handles, pottery owls and one or two of the things mentioned in your story as well!

el dingo

Friday, February 26, 2016

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Nursing home battling residents' fears after slaying

bgdailynews.com

- By DEBORAH HIGHLAND dhighland@bgdailynews.com
- Feb 26, 2016

SCOTTSVILLE — Employees at Scottsville Manor nursing home are working to reassure their residents that they are safe after another resident, Gary Glueck, 71, was killed there Thursday.

"Their safety is No. 1 right now," Scottsville Manor Administrator Lesa Keen said as she fought back tears. "We're trying to take care of our residents who are here."

"This is their home," she said.

The nursing home is bringing in additional people Friday to work with residents at the 40-bed facility in assuaging any fears they might have, Keen said. This is the first time anyone has been the victim of a homicide at the nursing home.

A man formerly known as Robert Reynolds, 35, who changed his name legally to The Reverend, was arrested Thursday and charged with murder, according to a release from the Scottsville Police Department.

The Reverend remains in Allen County Detention Center without bond. No court date had been set Friday morning.

Glueck, 71, was killed when he was stabbed by a pen and had an electrical cord wrapped around his neck, according to Allen County Coroner Darren E. Davis.

On what would have been his 72nd birthday Friday, Glueck's body was instead at the state medical examiner's office in Louisville where a medical examiner determined the cause of death as asphyxia via strangulation, Davis said. Glueck also had sharp force injuries.

Prior to Glueck's death, he and The Reverend, also a nursing home resident, had been in a verbal altercation at the nursing home, Scottsville police Detective John Rose said.

Glueck was a ward of the state and does not have any known relatives, Davis said.

Scottsville has become a small town weary of homicides dominating their news.

"We've had four in four months," Davis said.

— Follow Assistant City Editor Deborah Highland on Twitter at twitter.com/BGDNCrimebeat or visit bgdailynews.com.

bgdailynews.com

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Nursing home resident, 35, charged in older resident's death

20:16 EST, 26 February 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Nursing home resident Robert Reynolds charged in older resident's death



Sunday, Feb 28th 2016 10PM
54°F 1AM 53°F 5-Day Forecast

Satanist who legally changed his name to The Reverend 'murders' elderly nursing home resident using a lamp cord to strangle him'

The Reverend, formally known as Robert Reynolds, is seen in an undated photo provided by the Allen County Jail. He has been charged with killing 71-year-old Gary Glueck of the Scottsville Manor nursing facility in Kentucky. Police say The Reverend went to the nurses station to say he was thirsty and ask for water before saying he killed Gary. Authorities say he used a cord from a lamp in the room to strangle the resident. The state medical examiner's office determined Glueck, who was under Kentucky State Guardianship, died from strangulation. Scottsville Police Chief Jeff Pearson (above) said the call about the murder came in around 4pm. Authorities say a nurse checked the room at 2pm and found no issues. It's unclear why The Reverend was being housed at Scottsville Manor that appears to also care for mentally and physically disabled people along with elderly patients. The suspect has at least two Facebook pages and in a post from last month he declared himself a satanist. He also wrote that he is the 'Spiritual Grandson of American Church of Satan Founder Anton LaVey'. In a Facebook post from January 27, he shared a link to the Death with Dignity website and wrote: 'I'm Schizophrenic and there's no cure.' Scottsville Manor Administrator Lesa Keen said additional people are being brought in to reassure residents of their safety at the 40-bed facility. They declined to comment about the murder.

- Police arrested The Reverend, who was formerly named Robert Reynolds, on a murder charge Thursday
- He is accused of killing Gary Glueck, 71, a resident at Scottsville Manor
- Police Chief says suspect went to nurses station to say he was thirsty and wanted a drink of water before saying he killed Gary
- Suspect appears to have declared himself a satanist in a Facebook post in January and created his own religion called Reynoldsianism

By Regina F. Graham For

Daily Mail

Dailymail.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

A Kentucky man who is a satanist named 'The Reverend' has been charged with killing a 71-year-old resident of a nursing home facility.

Police said a man formerly named Robert Reynolds, 35, was arrested on a murder charge Thursday and was held without bond in Allen County Detention Center.

They said he legally changed his name to The Reverend.

According to WBKO, Scottsville Police Chief Jeff Pearson said: 'The gentleman who changed his name, his legal name is The Reverend, came to the nurses station to say he was thirsty

and he wanted a drink of water.

Scroll down for video



'He said he had killed Gary. He used a cord from a lamp in the room to do the

strangulation.'



Allen County Coroner Darren E. Davis told the Daily News in Bowling Green that 71-year-old Gary Glueck was stabbed with a pen and had an electrical cord wrapped around

his neck.

Davis said the state medical examiner's office determined Glueck, who was under Kentucky State Guardianship, died from strangulation.

Scottsville police Detective John Rose said the men had been in an argument, but did not say what about.

It's unclear why The Reverend was being housed in the facility that appears to also care for mentally and physically disabled people as well as the elderly.

It appears as though the suspect has at least two Facebook pages and in a post from last month he allegedly declared himself a satanist.

It also appears that he created his own religion, called Reynoldsianism, where 'the mission is great and we promote all Faith while dismissing none'.

The Facebook page for the 1st Church of Reynoldsianism lists the Scottsville Manor facility



address as to where the church is located.

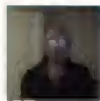
In addition, he also created a website, titled 'THE REVEREND: REYNOLDSIAN / EASY LISTENING SATANIC MUSIC', where he shares original songs centered around Satanism.

In a Facebook post from January 27,

he shared a link to the Death with Dignity website and wrote:

'I'm Schizophrenic and there's no cure. Everyday folks here at the home have to do everything for me, but I need it.

'With no thought that life will ever improve why must I live this way. Solely the Dutch seem to understand thus far. Ave, The Reverend'.



Rev-Anton DeSade

January 16 · 🌐

I Worship Satan. Any questions feel free to ask.



Like



Share



Rev-Anton DeSade

January 21 · 🌐

I am the Spiritual Grandson of American Church of Satan Founder Anton LaVey.



Like



Share

Scottsville Manor Administrator Lesa Keen said additional people are being brought in to reassure residents of their safety at the 40-bed facility. They did not comment about the murder or the suspect.



Some residents in the town are uneasy, since this is the fourth murder in less than four months, where as from 2008 to 2014 only four happened in that period.

'Deaths, homicides. They're just hard to imagine, you just don't see a lot of that. We see it on TV, but not at home,' Scottsville resident Mark Meador told WBKO.

Another resident wants to feel more safe at home and is planning to get his concealed carry license.

'It's very alarming. I've been here all my life, born and raised here. Never known anything like this. You know, and as a family, we feel insecure,' Scottsville resident William Bray told

WBKO.



Comments (1)

The comments below have been moderated in advance.

Niko, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1 day ago

He says he's a Satanist. Well buddy, you've got a one way ticket and front row seat to hell.

Published by Associated

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Ohio Killer Who Ate Part of Roommate's Brain Up for Parole

Published at 4:00 PM CST on Feb 29, 2016

nbcchicago.com

David Allen Chapin, 60, is currently serving a life sentence and has been denied parole at least six times.



Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

A man in Ohio who fatally shot his roommate almost 40 years ago and ate part of his brain is under review for parole.

David Allen Chapin, 60, is currently serving a life sentence at the Allen Correction Institution in Lima, Ohio, according to state records. He has been denied parole at least six times, a spokesperson from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction told NBC Chicago.

Chapin shot his roommate Donald Liming in Milford, Ohio, on Oct. 3, 1978, The Cincinnati Enquirer reports. The pair, who had been friends since childhood, had been arguing about religion; Chapin was a Baptist and Liming said he was a Catholic, a Buddhist, as well as a pagan, according to the publication.

Chapin put Liming's body into the trunk of his Buick Skylark and drove to a community college he was attending, the Enquirer reported, citing archives. While in biology class, Chapin asked the professor if he needed a corpse to dissect.

During the course of his murder trial in Clermont County, Chapin explained to a court-ordered psychiatrist that he devoured part of Liming's brain as part of a "mutual agreement" between the roommates, according to the Enquirer.

The Ohio Parole Board conducted a closed release consideration hearing on Feb. 1, and the case was referred to the Central Office Board Review, according to JoEllen Smith of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. A decision is pending.

The case has now been moved to the Central Office Board Review for consideration, which will review his case history and the public's opinion before they make a recommendation, according to Smith.

Additionally, a public hearing could be scheduled where Liming's family and the Clermont County Prosecutor would oppose Liming's release, according to the Enquirer.

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Ohio township to drop case against 'Zombie Nativity'

yahoo.com

February 16, 2016 7:26 PM



CINCINNATI (AP) — A suburban township in southwest Ohio is dropping its court case against a man charged with zoning violations for his holiday "Zombie Nativity" scene, an official said Tuesday.

Jasen Dixon's display had ghoulish figures in place of the baby Jesus and others who would be in traditional Christmas Nativities.

Sycamore Township officials said he violated rules about an improper "accessory use" structure housing the nativity scene in his front yard.

Dixon was facing thousands of dollars in fines, but his defense argued the township was trying to suppress his freedoms.


Associated Press

Township administrator Greg Bickford told The Cincinnati Enquirer (<http://cin.ci/1PP16pA>) that since the display has been taken down, there's no need to spend taxpayer dollars continuing the litigation.

A Hamilton County judge had planned to rule March 15 on a motion to dismiss the case. He heard arguments earlier this month as a handful of people dressed and made up as zombies demonstrated outside the courthouse.

Dixon's attorney, Rob Linneman, called the township's decision to drop the case a victory for freedom of expression and property rights.

"A lot of people have looked at this case as a humorous story, but there is a fundamental principle at stake," Linneman said. "The real importance of the First Amendment is that it protects unconventional and unpopular viewpoints from persecution."

Dixon has put the display up the last two holiday seasons, drawing widespread attention on social media and scattered criticism. Township officials have said they aren't anti-zombie, but were enforcing zoning laws.

There could also be a Zombie Nativity III sequel. Bickford wouldn't say whether the township would bring charges if it's back in December.

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it — if we come to it," he said.

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Olm eggs raise hopes for rare 'dragon' birth

mnn.com

A cave in Slovenia is abuzz about the possibility of baby olms — ghostly 'dragons' that can live for 100 years but rarely reproduce.

Russell McLendon

March 3, 2016, 4:04 p.m.



Olms are amphibians, but their odd appearance led a 17th-century naturalist to mistake them for baby dragons. (Photo: SanShoot/Flickr)

The olm is almost too bizarre to believe. Nicknamed "baby dragon" and "human fish," the cave dweller owes its odd looks to subterranean adaptations like external gills, skin-covered eyes and a long, pale body. If that's not alien enough, it can also live for 100 years, go a decade without food and use electricity to "see" in total darkness.

Olms have lurked deep within parts of Europe for 200 million

years, or about 1,000 times longer than our species has been around so far. The spectral cave salamanders were first reported in 1689, when the Slovenian naturalist Janez Vajkard Valvasor understandably mistook them for the offspring of dragons.

Science has since cleared that up, yet olms remain shrouded in mystery centuries later. And despite their long history of evading and confusing us, we now represent one of the species' greatest threats — and possibly one of its best allies.

Given their lengthy life spans, olms take an unhurried approach to romance. In fact, they only breed once or twice a decade, and along with their species' general secrecy, that makes olm eggs an uncommon sight. That's why scientists are so exuberantly nurturing a clutch of 50 to 60 eggs recently laid at a cave in Slovenia.

"It is rare and it is exciting," biologist Sašo Weltdt told the New York Times in February, after the eggs were found. "I was jumping when I saw the first one and the second one. It's something you don't want to miss when working as a biologist in a cave."

Postojna Cave dives at least 24 kilometers (15 miles) under Slovenia, carved from limestone over millions of years by the Pivka River. It's a popular tourist destination, thanks to dramatic scenery, native olms and an aquarium built inside the cave, which also contains olms for easier public viewing. That aquarium is where the new olm eggs are located, offering an unusual level of visibility for the shy salamanders.

It's still unclear how many might hatch — or when — but scientists have said three of the



Olm eggs take months to develop, and they're highly vulnerable in the meantime.
(Photo: Iztok Medja/Postojna Cave)

eggs are showing signs of growth so far. Here's a recent video of the Postojna mother with her brood, which she has tucked under a flat rock for safety:

Olms are entirely aquatic, unlike most amphibians, and their subterranean lifestyle has allowed their skin to abandon pigment and grow over their eyes. They can still sense some light, but that's nothing compared with their

other, weirder senses.

"In place of sight, the olm has developed an acute sensory system for hunting in the dark," explains the Zoological Society of London. "The front part of the olm's head carries sensitive chemo-, mechano- and electroreceptors. Olms have one of the best senses of smell of any amphibian, and are capable of sensing very low concentrations of organic compounds in the water through both smell and taste."

Along with ears specialized to hear underwater, olms' ability to sense electrical and magnetic fields — and to detect subtle chemical cues in water — more than makes up for their undeveloped eyes. And even if all those skills fail to help them find food, they can survive 10 years without a meal. Yet despite such impressive adaptations, 200 million years of evolution may still not have prepared olms for us.



olm at Postojna Cave in Slovenia

Olms are Europe's only true cave vertebrates, and the only species in the genus *Proteus*.
(Photo: Jure Makovec/Getty Images)

Scientists don't have enough data to estimate the overall abundance of olms, but due to population declines observed in recent decades, the salamanders are listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species.

The main threat for olms is transformation of the forests and fields above their caves, according to the IUCN, "largely through tourism,

economic changes and increasing water pollution." Such upheaval has a direct effect on the quality of habitat available to olms, which rely on clean water and are susceptible to pollution seeping from the surface. Poaching for the pet trade has also been a persistent danger, even

after Slovenia legally protected olms in 1922, but the country's protection mechanisms have reportedly improved since it joined the European Union in 2004.



Postojna is known as 'the queen of Slovenian caves' — high praise in a country with 11,000 caves. (Photo: Shutterstock)

As rare as olm eggs are, Postojna does have some recent experience. Another female olm graced the cave with eggs in 2013, but some were eaten by predators (including other olms) and the rest failed to hatch. Scientists learned from that failure, however, and are taking extra precautions with the 2016 crop. All olms except the mother have been removed from the tank, the BBC reports, while cave staff are adding extra oxygen to the water and using shades to protect the eggs from light.

"Now it's up to them," Weldt says. Olm eggs develop slowly in multiple stages, which can vary in length based on temperature. If water is 11 degrees Celsius (52 Fahrenheit), the entire process takes at least 120 days. But since these eggs are in roughly 9-degree C (48 F) water, scientists expect them to take even longer.

"The dragons will keep us waiting for a while," the cave's website warns.

Russell McLendon (@russsmclendon) writes about humans and other wildlife.

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Oregon Occupier Countersues For \$666 Billion, Citing 'Works Of The Devil'

February 18, 2016

npr.org



Rob Kerr/AFP/Getty Images hide caption toggle caption Rob Kerr/AFP/Getty Images Shawna Cox, seen here walking with Ammon Bundy and other armed anti-government protesters at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Ore., last month, cites "extremely serious public corruption" in a countersuit. Both Cox and Bundy face federal charges. Rob Kerr/AFP/Getty Images

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Shawna Cox, seen here walking with Ammon Bundy and other armed anti-government protesters at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Ore., last month, cites "extremely serious public corruption" in a countersuit. Both Cox and Bundy face federal charges.

Shawna Cox, one of the last militants to be arrested for occupying an Oregon wildlife refuge last month, has filed a

countersuit against the U.S. government and others in which she alleges "damages from the works of the devil in excess of 666,666,666,666.66."

While she invoked the number of the beast in her request for damages, Cox listed a wide array of people she plans to subpoena, including: ranchers in the western U.S.; judges and prosecutors; Oregon's current and former governor; local and state police officers; FBI agents; and "various law professors."

Cox said she plans to ask a jury to deliver civil and criminal penalties against many of those same people, who she says have worked to subvert the constitutional government and impose "socialism, communism and imperialism types of government onto the people of the United States of America."

The complaint was filed Wednesday, the same day a federal grand jury indicted Cliven Bundy along with his sons Ryan and Ammon and two other people for "a raft of felony charges related to a 2014 armed standoff," as Oregon Public Broadcasting reports. That 2014 standoff is seen as a forerunner to the occupation of the Malheur refuge in Oregon.

Federal and state police arrested Cox and Ammon and Ryan Bundy in late January; the Malheur standoff ended two weeks later with the surrender of the last holdouts at the refuge.

The federal charges against Cox include a felony count of "conspiracy to impede officers of the United States from discharging their official duties through the use of force, intimidation, or threats."

Saying that she's the victim of malicious prosecution, Cox states that her group was using the legal tactic of "hostile adverse possession" to expose what they see as the federal government's fraudulent handling of land in the former Northwest Territories.

In her complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Oregon, Cox also says the group seized control of Malheur at a time when the refuge was preparing to shut down for the winter. She denies interfering with government employees, saying, "If anything, it was their choice to not come to work, out of guilt."

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Discover the Congelier Mansion: 'America's Most Haunted House' about.com

Congelier Mansion, 1129 Ridge Avenue

By Albrecht Powell

Updated December 10, 2014.

Formerly known as the Most Haunted House in America, the home of carpetbagger Charles Wright Congelier, his Mexican wife Lyda, and a young servant girl, Essie, was located at 1129 Ridge Avenue, in the Manchester, North Side, neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The story of its life as a haunted house* begins in the winter of 1871, with Lyda's discovery of Charles having an affair with the maid. Lyda was so enraged, that she fatally stabbed Charles and chopped off Essie's head.

For the next 20 years the house remained vacant. It was remodeled to accommodate railroad workers in 1892, but they soon moved out, claiming to hear the sobbing and screaming of a woman. The Most Haunted House in America once again stood vacant.

Around 1900, Dr. Adolph C. Brunrichter bought the home. "Keeping to himself, the doctor was rarely seen by his neighbors. Then on August 12, 1901, the family next door heard a terrifying scream from the Brunrichter residence," wrote Richard Winer and Nancy Osborn in their book, *Haunted Houses*.

"When they ran outside to investigate, the neighbors saw a red explosion-like flash shooting through the house. The earth under them trembled, and the sidewalls cracked. Every window in the doctor's home was shattered."

When officials entered the house to investigate, they found a decomposed female body strapped to the bed and five headless young women in basement graves. "Dr. Brunrichter had been experimenting with severed heads," wrote Winer and Osborn. "Apparently he had been able to keep some alive for short periods after decapitation." Dr. Brunrichter, meanwhile, had disappeared, and the house once again stood vacant.

As a result of its reputation for being haunted, the house stood empty for several years before undergoing its second remodeling to ready it for housing emigrant Equitable Gas Company workers. These workers experienced many strange occurrences but wrote them off as pranks by the American workers they had replaced (for lower wages). One night things took a tragic turn, however, and two of the workers were found dead in the basement.

One had a board driven like a stake through his chest, and the other was hanging from a rafter. These men had both been seen alive just minutes earlier.

In 1920, the famous scientist and inventor, Thomas Edison, came to study the house. Edison spoke of a machine that he was building to allow communication with the dead. Edison died before the mechanism was perfected. Winer and Osborn wrote that Thomas Edison's visit to the house at 1129 Ridge Avenue apparently influenced his strong belief in the afterlife.

In September of 1927, a drunk was arrested who claimed to be Dr. Adolph Brunrichter. He told police gruesome stories of sex orgies, demonic possession, torture and murder that had occurred in the house.

The authorities could not determine if the man they had in custody was indeed Dr. Brunrichter. The man was released after a month and was never seen again.

Days were numbered for the haunted house which everyone was convinced was evil. Nearby, on the site that is now the Carnegie Science Center, stood the largest natural gas storage facility in the world. On the morning of November 15, 1927, the giant gas storage tank owned by the Equitable Gas Company exploded with an awesome force which was felt across the county. The Story of Old Allegheny City, compiled by workers of the Writers' Program of the Works Projects Administration, describes the destruction. "As houses collapsed and chimneys toppled, brick, broken glass, twisted pieces of steel and other debris rained on the heads of the dazed and shaken residents who had rushed into the streets from their wrecked homes, believing that an earthquake had visited the city." The force was so strong it reportedly blew out windows throughout downtown, Mt. Washington, and as far away as East Liberty. Dozens of manufacturing plants and hundreds of homes were damaged or destroyed within a 20-mile radius.

The Most Haunted House in America, which once stood at the present day site of the Route 65/I279 interchange, was obliterated in the explosion. According to Winer and Osborn, it was the only structure destroyed in the blast for which no trace was ever found.

** The above ghost story is just that - most likely a story. Born partially of truth, but the vast majority appears to be fictional in nature. Perhaps the house really was evil, however. While the house was damaged, not completely obliterated, in that Equitable Gas explosion, Marie Congelier, age 28, died that day according to newspaper reports. She was hit by flying glass and bled to death on the way to the hospital. Even if the rest of the Original Most Haunted House in America tale isn't true, I wouldn't blame her for haunting the area!*

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Osthryth, Queen of the Mercians - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

March 6, 2016 By Medievalists.net

By Susan Abernethy

Osthryth was one of the few women mentioned by the Venerable Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. She was born into a time of great strife. There was much tension and bad blood between the ruling houses of the various kingdoms in England before unification, especially between Mercia and Northumbria. It was also the era of the Christianization of the realm and there was conflict between Christians and pagans. She was married to a Mercian king, possibly in the hope of making an alliance.



Mercia – from *An English history with illustrations and maps*, by E. S. Symes 1905

We don't know when Osthryth was born but she came from royalty. She was a younger daughter of King Oswiu of Northumbria and his queen Eanflaed. She had two elder brothers Ecgrith and Aelfwine and a sister Aelflaed. Oswiu was the brother of the revered saint King Oswald of Northumbria, whom Bede much admires in his *History*. Oswald had been converted to Christianity.

King Oswald had come into conflict with the powerful pagan King Penda of Mercia. In 642, they clashed at the Battle of Maserfield where Oswald was killed and his body dismembered. Bede tells us that Oswald ended his life praying for the souls of his soldiers when he realized he was about to die. Upon his death, his brother Oswiu became king of the Bernicians as a vassal of King Penda of Mercia. In 655, Oswiu defeated and killed Penda at the Battle of Winwaed. Oswiu ended up dominating much

of Britain until a revolt in Mercia established Penda's son Wulfhere as their king. When Oswiu died in 670, Osthryth's brother Ecgrith succeeded his father as king.

When Wulfhere of Mercia died in 676, he was succeeded by his younger brother Aethelred. Somewhere during this time Osthryth married Aethelred. Aethelred may have been surprised by his succession to the throne of Mercia. He was the third son of Penda and most likely would have devoted himself to the church since he proved to be a pious and devout man. Osthryth and Aethelred were zealous in the promotion of Christianity in Mercia. The monastic house of Bardney in Lindsey was heavily endowed by the couple.

Bede tells us a story about Osthryth and the relics of her uncle King Oswald. Osthryth's father had retrieved Oswald's remains about a year after he died in battle. Sometime after 681, Osthryth wanted to translate the revered saint's relics and place them in her favorite abbey at Bardney. The Mercian monks of Bardney were sensitive and retained an aversion to the prior attempts by the Northumbrian kings to dominate them and refused to accept the bones of the saint even though they knew he was a holy man.

The carriage with the relics was stopped at the abbey gate in the evening and covered with a tent. During the night a shining pillar of light appeared over the carriage that shone up into the sky, bright enough to be seen throughout the kingdom of Lindsey. This proved the sanctity of the slain king. The monks who had refused the bones the day before began to pray that they be deposited among them and accepted them into the abbey. The bones were washed and placed in a sacred place. The water used to wash the bones was poured into the dirt in a corner of the sanctuary. Bede tells us later Queen Osthryth met with a holy abbess named Aethelhild and gave her some of this soil. Aethelhild took the holy soil back to her abbey and used it during an exorcism of a possessed man, curing him of his

demons.

Despite the alliance of Osthryth and Aethelred, the two kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia were in perpetual war against each other. Aethelred continued the feud by warring against Osthryth's brother Ecgrith, who was defeated at the battle of the Trent in 679. Osthryth's brother Aelfwine was killed in this battle. Bede tells us Aelfwine was beloved in both kingdoms and there was so much grief over his death it nearly resulted in a blood feud between the Mercian and Northumbrian royal families. Peace was only reached with the intervention and mediation of Archbishop Theodore and appropriate compensation was paid.

Sometime before 697, it seems Osthryth had retired to her favorite monastery at Bardney and become a nun and Aethelred had married another woman. In a most unfortunate event, Osthryth was murdered by Mercian noblemen that same year. The reason for the murder is not divulged in the chronicles. The most likely explanation is a blood feud related to her involvement in the killing of her sister's husband King Peada of southern Mercia in 646. Osthryth was buried at Bardney. In 704, Aethelred abdicated this throne to his nephew Coenred and retired to Bardney where he was shorn as a monk, became an abbot and died in 716. It is unclear whether Aethelred's son named Ceolred was born to Osthryth or his second unnamed wife. Ceolred succeeded his cousin Coenred when he died in 709.

Further reading: "Bede: The Ecclesiastical History of the English People" edited by Judith McClure and Roger Collins, "The Kings & Queens of Anglo-Saxon England" by Timothy Venning, "British Kings and Queens" by Mike Ashley, Entry on Osthryth in the Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, Volume 42 written by Edmund Venables

Susan Abernethy is the writer of *The Freelance History Writer* and a contributor to *Saints, Sisters, and Sluts*. You can follow both sites on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/thefreelancehistorywriter>) and (<http://www.facebook.com/saintssistersandsluts>), as well on *Medieval History Lovers*. You can also follow Susan on Twitter @SusanAbernethy2

Filed Under: Articles Tagged With: Anglo-Saxon England, Politics, Queenship, Seventh century

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Paris catacombs offer on Airbnb: spend the night with 6 million dead bodies

Agence France-Presse

Monday 12 October 2015 Last modified on Wednesday 14 October 2015

theguardian.com

Halloween offer allows two people to spend a night in the underground graveyard with a 'real bed', dinner, breakfast and private concert



The remains of millions of people were moved to the Catacombs in the late 18th century to avoid a public health problem in Paris. Photograph: Airbnb/REX Shutterstock For one night only, two people will have the chance to experience a Halloween night 20m under Paris in the catacombs. Photograph: Airbnb/REX Shutterstock 20m under Paris, the catacombs are known as the 'world's largest grave'. Photograph: Airbnb/Rex Shutterstock

No one has ever woken up alive in Airbnb's latest rental offer, but then again, no one has ever spent the night alongside 6 million dead Parisians in the city's catacombs.

For Halloween, the home rental website is offering brave travellers a night in the sprawling tunnels filled with skulls and bones that is one of Paris's most popular – and ghoulish – attractions.

The competition launched on the website offers two people a night in the catacombs on 31 October, with a "real bed", dinner with private concert and breakfast.



"Before

For one night only, two people will have the chance to experience a Halloween night 20m under Paris in the catacombs. Photograph: Airbnb/REX Shutterstock 20m under Paris, the catacombs are known as the 'world's largest grave'. Photograph: Airbnb/Rex Shutterstock

bedtime, a storyteller will have you spellbound with fascinating tales from the catacombs, guaranteed to produce nightmares. Finally, enjoy dawn with the dead, as you become the only living person ever to wake up in the Paris catacombs," reads the listing.

Town hall sources said on Monday the California-based Airbnb paid up to 350,000 euros to privatise the tunnels.

The transfer of human remains from Parisian cemeteries to the tunnels began towards the end of the 18th century, when authorities realised that the decomposition of bodies in the city's cemeteries was not particularly good for public health.

"It was said that the wine was turning bad and the milk was curdling," Sylvie Robin, the site's curator, told AFP in an interview last year.



For one night only, two people will have the chance to experience a Halloween night 20m under Paris in the catacombs. Photograph: Airbnb/REX Shutterstock 20m under Paris, the catacombs are known as the 'world's largest grave'. Photograph: Airbnb/Rex Shutterstock

Among the bones lining the walls of the 2km-long (1.2-mile) tunnels – only a small part of a network of abandoned underground quarries – are pictures and quotes about mortality.

"Think in the morning that you might not survive until the evening, and in the evening that you might survive until the morning," reads one.

The house rules section on Airbnb, which allows property dwellers and owners to rent a room or entire home, warns guests to "respect the catacombs as you would your own grave".

The catacombs, some 20m under the sewers and metro system, lures some 500,000 visitors a year. It has already been rented out to film crews and for fashion shows.

Writers such as Victor Hugo, Gaston Leroux and Anne Rice have all drawn inspiration from the spooky network of tunnels.

Airbnb, which was launched in 2008 and now has some 40 million users worldwide, recently agreed to pay a tourist tax to Paris from each of its bookings in the city.

The website has raised the ire of traditional hotel chains who see it as a rival that flouts tax laws.

The Paris town hall said the privatisation of the Catacombs would "boost capital by finding new sources of revenue [and allow for] the preservation of this heritage site".

comments (30)

- Rolf Nilsson

12 Oct 2015 22:00

Strange way to get a boner.

- Paul C. Dickie Rolf Nilsson

15 Oct 2015 11:38

Would one awaken feeling dead stiff?

- Bismarx

12 Oct 2015 23:21

I bet the lucky ones will have a cold afterwards. Rather chilly and humid place.

- dats_wat_I_say

13 Oct 2015 2:03

Closer to home, if you wanna spend the night with a million 'dead bodies', you could try Birmingham.

- SASOVIET

13 Oct 2015 2:15

No respect for the remains of millions, no wonder why world is crazy

- UnevenSurface SASOVIET

13 Oct 2015 2:30

Yes, I have to agree. Using 6,000,000 dead people as a marketing stunt shows remarkably poor taste.

- b0ld00t UnevenSurface

13 Oct 2015 2:46

Netanyahu will be terribly pissed off that he didn't think of it first!

- Mr_Grim SASOVIET

13 Oct 2015 5:02

The competition is to spend the night there, not set fire to the bones or use them to construct a giant xylophone.

Also, not sure why you think someone spending the night there is less respectful than the thousands of tourists walking through it every day...?

- gerson008

13 Oct 2015 2:21

You get paid doing this right?

Where's the shower and toilet? Somewhere in the sewage?

- Mr_Grim gerson008

13 Oct 2015 5:03

When did humans get so soft and pathetic?

- gerson008 Mr_Grim

13 Oct 2015 16:35

My guess is when Sprunik was sent to space in 1957, or it could be some clever hominid decided to make fire some hundred of thousand years ago.

Damnit those Victorian Londoners should have been harden up with Cholera in 1800s, what a silly idea with sewage. Too soft and pathetic!!

- babiss

13 Oct 2015 2:24

I know the Pig party are intent in killing off the disabled pensioners cancer patients and the homeless but didn,t realise cammoron drunken smitt and ,unt had "achieved "such high numbers.

- whatyousayistrue

13 Oct 2015 3:18

The best thing the Irish brought the world (Halloween) closely followed by Guinness, enjoy al and be safe.

- MauditFrancais1979

13 Oct 2015 5:14

Ew. Gross. Zombies and everything related are beginning to replace sex as your selling point when you don't have any selling point. From bad to worse indeed. Disrespectful and cringingly puerile.

- shockmeister

13 Oct 2015 5:35

Loved the experience when I was there, the quotes, lighting, temperature all add to it; but this is a bit too tacky

- samlebon23

13 Oct 2015 6:05

Why exactly 6 million?

- b0ld00t samlebon23

14 Oct 2015 1:31

It's a popular figure. :)

- samlebon23 b0ld00t

14 Oct 2015 7:28

Very old popular figure.

- Paul C. Dickie samlebon23

15 Oct 2015 11:36

It's a (very) round number.

- mrhodes

13 Oct 2015 9:24

no one has ever spent the night alongside six million dead Parisians in the city's catacombs.

Certainly not true. Urban-explorers (even before they were known as urbex, decades before, at least in the 80s) have explored most of the vast underground spaces under Paris.

- ID6601921 mrhodes

15 Oct 2015 2:18

I was thinking that. I know loads of people that have spent their weekends down there.

- Vivien H Mar

14 Oct 2015 0:01

Why only October 31? Or other dates possible?

- magicsimon Vivien H Mar

14 Oct 2015 1:09

It's halloween?

- katya2006au

14 Oct 2015 4:25

Dead people won't hurt you, it's the live ones you have to watch!

- CliveG7

14 Oct 2015 7:15

Whoever is going to sleep down there better not be into astral planing whilst asleep, otherwise they might just find themselves back in the wrong body at the end of it all . . .

At the end of the 1990s, when I tapped one of the skulls with my fingernail it seemed a bit plastic to me, but they're all absolutely for real.

- DracoFerret

14 Oct 2015 7:41

are you barmy ???

- DaisyPetunia

14 Oct 2015 8:02

The house rules section on Airbnb, which allows property dwellers and

owners to rent a room or entire home, warns guests to “respect the catacombs as you would your own grave”.

To some people I know, that would not be a deterrent but an *invitation* to excess...

- Amelia Wigmore

15 Oct 2015 2:36

So now Paris sells its heritage for hard cash, but whine when progress is built in the middle of the city.

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Retrieved March 4th 2016 11:02pm PST USA

Man charged with insulting the modesty of women by exposing himself to girls



Mohamad Bukhari Mat Jusoh

By: Mahesh Sarin

A man was arrested for insulting the modesty of women by exposing himself.

Police in Malaysia, arrested 26-year-old Mohamad Bukhari Mat Jusoh of Kampung Pauh, after being accused of exposing his private parts in public.

According to police, Jusoh, who is single, stood in front of the Tomato Cafe on Jalan Kebun Sultan Street, where he exposed his private parts to women under the age of 23.

He allegedly committed the offense about 7:40 p.m.

Jusoh was arrested on charges of insulting the modesty of women and sexual harassment. He pleaded not guilty to the charge before Magistrate Majistret Nik Habri Muhamad.

He was released after posting RM 5,000 (about \$1,200) bail.

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Pennsylvania Haunts & History

Pennsylvania and its neighbors are bursting with tradition, legends, tall tales and ghosts. Each week we'll introduce one or two of their strange and spooky stories to you. Click on Pennsylvania Haunts and History to get to our website's home page.

PA Haunts & History sites:

Thursday, October 25, 2007

We'll take a cruise up I-79 and head towards Erie for today's story. This gruesome tale starts in a quiet wooded area off of Sterrettania Road in Millcreek. There you'll find the burned out foundations of a small home. (Not anymore, though. We've been told that plot was the last site sold in the housing project that's sprung up in the area.)

A rock path from there will lead you to a creek with a tree stump near its' bank. A jealous husband who suspected his wife of cheating on him with a farmhand chased her down that path and beheaded her with an axe on that stump. (Other versions say he killed her and his children in the house.) Then he immolated himself by setting the small house on fire.

Skip ahead a few years. A young couple are driving down a narrow road along the creek in the rain when the car got mired in the mud. The driver, being cautious in the secluded spot, told the girl to lock herself in the vehicle while he went for help.

She sat for what seemed to be forever in the car. Then she heard the muffled sounds of a struggle, followed by a gurgling noise. A bright light shone in the car and a voice commanded her to get out. Too terrified to protest, she unlocked the door and stepped into the rain. Hanging from a tree by his ankles was her dead boyfriend, blood dripping from his slit throat.

She turned to the man, and then ran screaming into the dusk. The shadowy figure held a light in one hand, an axe glistening with blood in the other, and was reaching out for her. If you ever visit an old friend that's a long-time Erie local, ask him about the tale. He'll know it. He may offer to take you there. A nice rainy evening would be a perfect time to visit.

Erie's not the only place with a similarly gruesome tale. A reader wrote "There was a tragic murder in York county on Iron Stone Road. A husband killed his pregnant wife and children with an axe and then hung himself. It's said that spheres of lights circle the house!"

There's also supposed to be another Axe Murder Hollow in McKean. A reader, Sally, wrote that "Axe Murder Hollow is located in an area of Thomas Road between Sterrettania Road and California Drive. I lived within walking distance of Axe Murder Hollow for over 30 years and never met any kind of Ghost or supernatural being."

"The property around there is all privately owned property and I knew one of the owners. He owned a lot of construction equipment and was sick of curiosity seekers trespassing on his property and would go out at night with a shotgun with rock salt and fire in the direction of trespassers. This, of course, just added to the excitement and rumors." As for us, we think we'd rather bump into an unarmed spook.

Developers in Erie gobbled up the land and built suburban homes in the Hollow; even the old burnt-out lot was sold. You can barely recognize the place now. But the road is still there, running right along the creek...

11 comments:

Gaslight said...

Why are there never any names or dates in stories about "Axe Murder Hollow?" This story is not even urban myth, it is pure fiction.

March 2, 2010 at 11:56 AM

Ron Ieraci said...

Gaslight - that's what makes it and other like tales an urban legend rather than historic fact. Maybe it's rooted in some dusty old event passed down by mouth; maybe it's a figment of someone's imagination that's somehow taken hold in popular lore. Could it be fabricated out of whole cloth? Sure - but something about the area lent itself to the story. Heck, it may be nothing more than a cautionary tale meant to scare backseat Romeos away from the lane. Who knows? The person that started the story, maybe three generations ago, sure ain't telling.

March 3, 2010 at 10:37 AM

Anonymous said...

My thoughts are this. A jealous man kills his wife. We hear this everyday in the news. Some creep decides to kill innocent travelers and blame an old tale. We hear this in the news too. My mother grew up here in Erie and she personally knew people that were able to research facts and nothing has been able to prove that it didn't happen

March 15, 2011 at 9:36 PM

Ron Ieraci said...

Anon - that's the beauty of these tales; they've been passed down through the generations, and there's some event behind the lore. This one could very well be the story of a long-ago crime. As you say, it happens every day.

March 15, 2011 at 11:22 PM

Anonymous said...

If it is pure fiction then by definition it is an Urban Legend.

April 30, 2011 at 3:57 PM

Ron Ieraci said...

Anon - We categorize things as urban legends when the events aren't verifiable. That's not the same as not happening, though that, of course, is one possibility.

May 3, 2011 at 6:41 PM

Azurerains said...

I am from Erie & have been there many times growing up. They built houses there & the site where the old foundation stood was the last lot to sell.

August 25, 2011 at 9:52 PM

Sally Owen said...

Axe Murder Hollow is located in an area of Thomas Road between Sterrettania Road and California Drive, in McKean, Pa. I lived on Sterrettania Road, within walking distance of "Axe Murder Hollow" for over 30 years.

I used to walk my dogs through the area known as "Axe Murder Hollow" quite frequently. Never met any kind of Ghost or supernatural being. I have walked through there all hours of the day & night.

I did; however, stay on the road. The property around there is all privately owned property and I knew one of the owners. He owned a lot of construction equipment and was sick of curiosity seekers trespassing on his property and would go out at night with a shotgun with rock salt and fire in the direction of trespassers he would hear in the woods. This, of course, just added to the excitement and rumors.

November 26, 2011 at 8:40 AM
Debbie said...

I ACTUALLY LIVED THERE in Erie, Pennsylvania on Thomas Road. My dad built a house in those same exact woods. He never told us the story till about a year later of living there but I personally thought it was pretty coolest thing living in the haunted woods. I live in Florida now but I miss those beautiful woods and the big open stream of water by them. Living there I never saw anything mysterious but you never know ;)

November 12, 2013 at 12:42 AM
Willy T said...

I grew up in this area of Millcreek. Any kid who went to Walnut Creek Middle School, right down the road from here, can tell you a different version of this urban legend. Based in truth or total fabrication, it was harrowing stuff at that age! When I went there in the 90's, they still did a hay ride down that road every Halloween, and some faculty member would usually dress up like the bloody, lantern holding murderer. It was memorable enough for me to look it up just now! Thanks for posting this

January 27, 2014 at 10:47 PM
Anonymous said...

when I was four I told my mom I was murdered by my either a Boyfriend or husband truck driver - I still remember telling her he chopped off my legs with an axe - on a porch - only one long rock road in wooded area to a small farm house - cant remember a creek though but he accused me of being out with another man because I wasn't home when he came in ... it still bothers me at 41 looked everywhere on net any suggestions for more axe murders in 1973 I guess or before.

May 29, 2015 at 1:14 PM

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Daily 2 Cents: Mother Films 'Ghost' in Baby's Cot -- Alien or Ghost? -- Mysterious Martian 'Cauliflower' phantomsandmonsters.com

Monday, September 23, 2013

The 'Squallies'



I received the following information from a reader...referencing a legend near the Florida Everglades:

East of Naples, Florida, on the edge of the Everglades, is a large, partially developed residential area called Golden Gate Estates. Originally a Florida land scheme run by the Rosen family in the 1960s, some of the area has been developed while the rest consists of miles and miles of streets with few or no

houses. The portion south of Alligator Alley was purchased by the State of Florida and is being restored to its natural state. Residents of the area are frequently visited by bears, bobcats, deer, hogs, and even panthers.

According to local legends, somewhere in this vast area lives a group of people called *the Squallies*. They are said to be short, human-like creatures with a pig-like snout. Also called squally kids due to their short stature, according to most accounts they are a community of 30 to 50 adults.

There are several stories as to their origins. Some claim that they are the were produced from a government genetics experiment gone wrong. There are stories about an abandoned laboratory somewhere near DeSoto Boulevard and Oil Well Road where they were created. Others claim that they are simply a family of highly in-bred humans who live in the vast Everglades.

According to some of the legends they live in a place called the *Naithlorendum Sanctuary*. Allegedly, the sanctuary is guarded by a crazy old man who will shoot trespassers on sight. It is unclear if he is a security guard or if he is actually the scientist who created the Squallies. All agree that the Squallies will try to capture any humans who enter their sanctuary and eat them alive.

Is this just an urban legend? Quite possibly. I was able to find just one documented report of questionable veracity:

GOLDEN GATE ESTATES, Fla., June 14, 2011 (UPI) -- Police in Florida said a man accused of crashing his motorcycle told officers the incident was the fault of

the "boogeyman."

The Florida Highway Patrol said James Scarborough, 49, of Golden Gate Estates, was taken to Physicians Regional Hospital with minor injuries Sunday after he apparently crashed his motorcycle into some trees and became pinned under the vehicle, the Naples Daily News reported Tuesday.

Police said Scarborough was shouting profanities and attempting to leave his hospital bed when they arrived to interview him. They said he denied crashing his motorcycle and told them he had become pinned under the bike due to the actions of the "boogeyman."

Was it a Squally? Hard to say. Officers said they smelled a strong odor of alcohol on Scarborough's breath.

NOTE: the reader did point out that the story is quite similar to the legend of the *Pig Man of Cannock Chase*, UK. There are hundreds of these tales of weird feral people worldwide...though it doesn't make these stories less interesting. Like every strange legend, something most likely occurred to start the narrative. Lon

Posted by Lon Strickler at 11:39 AM

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Philadelphia bar offers Leap Day marriage proposal prizes

yahoo.com

Retrieved Feb 29th 9:49 PM PST USA

Philadelphia bar offers Leap Day marriage proposal prizes

14 hours ago

AP

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A historic Philadelphia tavern is offering some Leap Day incentives to women looking to settle down.

KYW-TV reports (<http://cbsloc.al/1Rfakvn>) McGillin's Olde Ale House is trotting out a Leap Day tradition encouraging women to propose to men. According to Irish folklore, February 29 was the one day of the year where women could pop the question to men. Legend has it that St. Brigid had complained to St. Patrick about how unfair it was for women to wait for men to propose, and they brokered the Leap Day deal.

McGillin's is offering \$100 gift cards to the first five women who propose to their man at the bar on Monday.

Owner Christopher Mullins says they decided to embrace the legend and the day.

The only catch? The man has to say "yes."

Information from: KYW-TV, <http://www.kywtv.com>

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

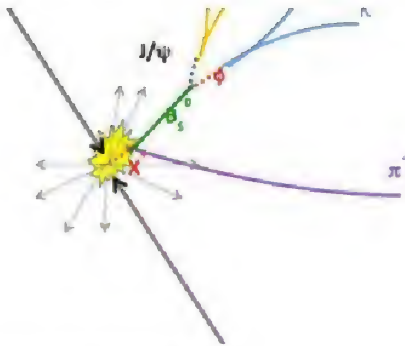
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Physicists May Have Discovered a New "Tetraquark" Particle

scientificamerican.com

Data from the DZero experiment shows evidence of a particle containing four different types of quarks

- By Clara Moskowitz on February 26, 2016



Evidence for a never-before-seen particle containing four types of quark has shown up in data from the Tevatron collider at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) in Illinois. The new particle, a class of "tetraquark," is made of a bottom quark, a strange quark, an up quark and a down quark. The discovery could help elucidate the complex rules that govern quarks—the tiny fundamental particles that make up the protons and neutrons inside all the

atoms in the universe.

Protons and neutrons each contain three quarks, which is by far the most stable grouping. Pairs of quarks, called mesons, also commonly appear, but larger conglomerations of quarks are extremely rare. Scientists at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in Switzerland last year saw the first signs of a pentaquark—a grouping of five quarks—which had long been predicted but never seen. The first tetraquark was found in 2003 at the Belle experiment in Japan, and since then physicists have encountered a half dozen different arrangements. But the new one, if confirmed, would be special. "What's unique in this case is that we basically have four quarks, which are all different—bottom, up, strange and down," says Dmitri Denisov, co-spokesperson for the DZero experiment. "In all previous configurations usually two quarks are the same. Is this telling us something? I hope yes."

The unusual arrangement, dubbed X(5568) in a paper submitted to *Physical Review Letters*, could reflect some deeper rule about how the different types, or "flavors," of quarks bind together—a process enabled by the strongest force in nature, called, appropriately, the strong force. Physicists have a theory—called quantum chromodynamics—that describes how the strong force works, but it is incredibly unwieldy and difficult to make predictions with. "While we understand many features of the strong force, we don't understand everything, especially how the strong force acts on large distances," Denisov says. "And on a fundamental level we still don't have a very good model of how quarks interact when there are quite a few of them joined together."

One open question is: How many quarks can stick together to form a particle? So far scientists have not seen groupings of more than five, but theoretically there is no limit. Physicists would also like to discover different configurations of four and five quarks than the handful that have been seen. "Finding tetraquarks has proven difficult to do, but it is likely that there are many more to find," says Fermilab physicist Don Lincoln, a member of the DZero

team.

The Tevatron collider shut down in 2011, but the DZero team found signs of the new tetraquark in the archive of data from the tens of billions of particle collisions it achieved during its 28 years of operation. Other experiments such as the LHC's LHCb ("b" stands for beauty) project are now looking through their own data to see if they also have evidence of the particle. "If it is real, it would be very interesting," says LHCb physicist Sheldon Stone of Syracuse University. "Discussions among LHCb collaborators have raised several issues of concern with the DZero result that LHCb can check expeditiously. Until the check is done and the DZero result is confirmed, we are not sure exactly what they are seeing."

Either way, scientists expect current particle accelerators—especially the LHC, which restarted last year at higher energy levels than ever before—to discover more new particle configurations in the coming years, making it an exciting time for quark physics and for clearing up the intricate mechanics of the strong force. "I would compare it with something like a puzzle—it's not finished yet but we've added one more piece to what was already known," Denisov says. "Hopefully there will eventually be a theory that explains these observations to gain a better understanding of these quarks and the forces acting between them."

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'Possessed' woman dressed in white terrifies Mexican villagers

09:35 EST, 29 February 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

'Possessed' woman terrifies Mexican villagers as she wanders the streets at night

Mystery woman in white terrifies Mexican village by wandering the streets at night, convincing them she's possessed

- Footage filmed in Culiacan, Mexico, starts with woman walking in the road
- She approaches a car window and shrieks, causing men inside to scream
- Woman is then seen kissing a tree surrounded by locals and authorities
- Officials investigating footage claim she could be mentally ill or on drugs

As the vehicle approaches the woman, she sits next to the hood and then starts making a strange noise, causing the men inside to shriek in terror. The woman, dressed in a white dress, also approaches the car window and shrieks at the men inside. The footage, which has been widely shared on social media, shows the woman at one point pinning next to a tree. In the last part of the video, locals and authorities can be seen around the woman who appears to be kissing the tree. The footage ends with locals and police trying to clam down the woman, while another lady pours water on her head.

By Alexander Robertson For Mailonline

Daily Mail

A video showing a woman dressed in white, wandering around the roads at night and scaring people has some believing she could be possessed by evil spirits.

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The footage was filmed in the Colinas del Rey District in the city of Culiacan, in the north-western Mexican state of Sinaloa where it was widely shared on social networks.

The first part of the clip that was filmed from inside a car shows a woman walking in the middle of the road dressed a ghost-like white outfit.

'Possessed' woman scares driver by standing in road growling



As the vehicle approaches her, she sits next to the hood and then starts making a strange noise, causing the men inside to shriek in terror.

She also gets to the driver's window and makes a roaring noise.

In the last part of the video, locals and authorities can be seen around the woman, who appears to be kissing a

tree.



She finally lays down on the ground as someone pours water on her face.

Although the authors of the video and many members of online communities believe she is possessed, the woman could be mentally ill, officials investigating the video said.

Ernesto Echverria Aispuro, a local health ministry official, suggested she might have been under the influence of drugs, saying: 'Bath salts and Krokodil are drugs that alter the consciousness of people.'

He was referring to a number of white powders and crystals sold on the street known as 'bath salts' – which are designer drugs – and Krokodil, the street name for a powerful morphine derivative.

The woman was not identified, but locals in the video call her 'Sofia'.

She is currently under the scrutiny of authorities for a series of psychiatric exams.



Comments (105)

The comments below have not been moderated.

Mrjoshua, New York, 16 minutes ago

Well, That gets the nomination for the creepiest thing I have seen today!!!!

pll, United States, United States, about an hour ago

Obviously the woman is in need of help and a good doctor. The scared & screaming men watching her may want to

reach out and help the poor lady.

Steve Hensley, Charlotte, United States, about an hour ago

Tree hugger. They are all crazy.

Boondocker, Roscommon, United States, about an hour ago

The poor woman is deranged get her to a hospital.

La Kittie, Brisbane Australia, Australia, about 2 hours ago

She is lucky someone didnt plow into her with their car out of fear.

Niccolo Machiavelli, New York, United States, about 2 hours ago

She's a Democrat Hillary supporter.

katholic, decatur, United States, about 2 hours ago

Any minute she'll start barking like Hillary did.

Niccolo Machiavelli, New York, United States, about 2 hours ago

She's a Democrat Hillary supporter.

John Xonk, Newark, United States, about 2 hours ago

I would take her into my house and "Plunge a stake in her". Just sayin'

Stryker, Lake Stevens, United States, about an hour ago

Your steak or a stake?

Stryker, Lake Stevens, United States, about an hour ago

Your steak or a stake?

John Xonk, Newark, United States, about 2 hours ago

I would hit it. Just sayin'

John Xonk, Newark, United States, about 2 hours ago

I would hit it. Just sayin'

Captain Clown, Gotham City, United States, about 3 hours ago

Sort of like.... 'Murica!

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Autistic 'Prison Houdini' is denied parole

16:52 EST, 28 February 2016 |

16:52 EST, 28 February 2016

dailymail.co.uk



Mark DeFriest (right, in jail) who was just 19 (left, on arrest in 1979) when he was jailed in 1979 for 'stealing' mechanic tools left to him in his father's will, may finally escape jail legally after 36 years. Notorious for his escapes, the inmate was able to memorize at a glance, a key dangling from a guard's belt, and replicate its intricate pattern to make his own out of almost anything (pictured are his hand crafted keys). DeFriest's four year sentence spiraled into almost decades behind bars - 27 of those in solitary confinement - after the genius escape artist's multiple break outs (pictured with a black eye while in prison). DeFriest was originally jailed for stealing mechanic tools left to him in his father's will - before probate was granted (pictured as a child with his father). Attorney Middleton had been working with DeFriest's wife Bonnie, 85, whom he met through a pen pal scheme and married in jail, for the past 15 years to get the Florida parole board to reconsider the inmate's case. Bonnie has been lining up mechanical work for her husband for when, she hopes, he is finally freed from jail.

Autistic 'Prison Houdini' who memorized guards' keys and carved exact replicas for 13 escape attempts in 36 years is denied parole

- Mark DeFriest jailed for 'stealing' tools left to him in his father's will in 1979
- DeFriest, then aged 19, was initially sentenced to four years behind bars but has been in jail for 36 years thanks to multiple escape attempts
- DeFriest, believed to be an autistic savant, can memorize a prison key simply by seeing it on a guard's belt before reproducing an exact copy
- He has attempted escape 13 times, making it out of the jail on seven occasions, only to later be recaptured
- A 2014 documentary on

Daily Mail

.com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

DeFriest saw 70 years knocked off sentence

- He was up for parole last week but the board denied his release and ordered him to complete a six month life skills program

By Hannah Parry For Dailymail.com

A 'Prison Houdini' who made 13 escape attempts during his 36 years behind bars has been denied parole.

Mark DeFriest is every prison guard's worst nightmare - an autistic savant able to memorize the design of a key hanging on an officer's belt just by looking at it before producing an exact replica in his cell.

Jailed in 1979 for stealing his father's tools, his multiple prison break-outs has seen his original four year sentence turn into decades behind bars - with 27 years in solitary

confinement.

A ground breaking documentary about his life saw a record 70 years knocked off his sentence last year and with it, his first chance at legitimate freedom in 36 years.

But that chance was snatched away on Wednesday when a Florida parole board voted not to release the 55-year-old for another six months.



© Tallahassee police



© The Life and Mind of Mark DeFriest

DeFriest's effective release date will now be August so that he can complete a transitional program that teaches life skills, his lawyer John Middleton said.

The date cannot come soon enough for the inmate who was frustrated with the news.

'August? Huh. You've got to be ...,' he said during a call with Gabriel London, the filmmaker who made the

documentary which helped change public opinion about case.

His lawyer, however, was more hopeful.

'It went well enough today that I would consider it a victory,' said Middleton, who has represented DeFriest for decades.

He added that DeFriest still may not be released in August as he has remaining time to serve for infractions committed while imprisoned in California and Alabama. Only if those penalties are lifted will he be paroled in six months.

DeFriest, who suffers from undiagnosed mental issues, was just 19 when he was jailed for 'stealing' mechanic tools left to him in his father's will - before probate was granted.

While he would have been allowed out aged 23, DeFriest's poor behavior and multiple escapes saw years added to his sentence that would have made him well over 100 on release.

Documentary goes into the mind of prison escapee Mark DeFriest

DeFriest has attempted escape 13 times, making it out of jail on seven of those occasions, only to later be recaptured.

During one incident he drugged prison guards with LSD to distract them while he made his escape. In another, he hot wired a car and broke into a friend's home.

However, filmmaker London's part-animated 2014 documentary *The Life and Mind of Mark*



DeFriest has started to change opinions around his case.

The film focuses on claims that DeFriest is a high functioning autistic which contributed to his inability to follow prison rules.

Even DeFriest's original arrest could be traced back to his mental health issues, London

argues.

His family was living in Gadsden County in 1979 when his father, who served in the OSS in the Second World War, died, the Charlotte County Florida Weekly reported.

His father, who believed the Communists were coming to America, had trained his son in survival, avoidance tactics, guns and mechanics.

After he passed away, DeFriest - whose autism meant he struggled to understand the complexities of inheritance law and probate - went to collect the tools his father had bequeathed him, only to have his stepmother call the police.

When officers arrived, the teenager panicked and ran. When the cops finally caught up with him they discovered he had a gun on him - that had never been taken out during the incident.



Four out of five psychiatrists testified that he was mentally ill and should not be sent to jail. The fifth has since recounted his statement.

Despite the testimonies, he was jailed for four years - a sentence that would turn into a life term.

'We're punishing him for being mentally ill. That's what's happening here,' DeFriest's attorney John Middleton told the Miami Herald in 2014.

'Mark is not a violent person, has never hurt anybody. He's been his own worst enemy in jail

by escaping and committing some crimes,' Middleton told the Commission on Offender Review.

Things snowballed from there and during his first escape he climbed over razor wire and ran.

In all, he had seven successful escapes in 13 attempts. He was also charged with stealing a car at gunpoint and breaking into a friend's home after one escape.

Each offense added more time to his sentence, and behavior problems gave the parole commission no reason to move up his release date. He has nearly 400 disciplinary reports on file, including 65 from 1983 alone.

Middleton said that in one incident, DeFriest duplicated the master key at Florida State Prison, the toughest in the state's system, and let out fellow inmates to roam around.

'He has a meticulous, disciplined, incredibly skilled mechanical mind that can pick up anything,' London said.



After glancing at keys, London said DeFriest was able to memorize the patterns and fabricate his own.

But he also used his skills to create intricate art out of materials like paper chip bag foil and Popsicle sticks.

After a 1981 escape, Bay County prison authorities placed DeFriest in total darkness with no clothes, no blankets, no toilet paper and no human contact for 11 days. He was often kept in a straight jacket - which he was able to free himself from - and claims he was regularly attacked with pepper spray.

A judge later compared the incarceration to conditions in a North Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camp.

Middleton said DeFriest has been assaulted several times in prisons and at one point spent years without being allowed yard time. That's why he kept trying to escape — not because he wasn't willing to complete his sentence, the lawyer said.

DeFriest claims that in a nightmareish ten-year stint, he went without seeing the sun once.

He was being kept on Florida State Prison's now-infamous X-wing - which was based one floor above the room which housed the electric chair and was home to the jail's most terrifying inmates.

At one point DeFriest even agreed to become a 'prison wife' for one of the wing's most feared inmates to try and survive.

The rest of the time, he spent in his 7-by 8-foot windowless cell - built specifically for him -



DeFriest.

without access to the prison yard.

The inmate has been kept in out-of-state prisons for his own protection since 1999 after witnessing guards beat another prisoner to death during his time at Florida State. State prison officials won't disclose where he is.

'We are committed to ensuring the safety of our staff and inmates by providing them appropriate security, supervision and care,' said Department of Corrections spokesman McKinley Lewis. The department declined to say anything else about

Middleton had been working with DeFriest's wife Bonnie, 85, whom he met through a pen pal scheme and married in jail, for the past 15 years to get the Florida parole board to reconsider the inmate's case.

Following the award-nominated documentary, a parole board in Tallahassee agreed to reduce DeFriest's release date from 2085 to March 2015 - cutting a record 70 years from his sentence.

Middleton is confident he will succeed outside of prison.

'Mark is not going to go out there and rob stores,' he said. 'This man is not stupid. He's extremely intelligent, and very talented.'

DeFriest's wife, who has been lining up mechanical work for him for his release, said after his sentence was commuted last year that it had been the news 'we hoped for.'

Comments (18)

The comments below have not been moderated.

SunnyK, Toronto Canada, about 4 hours ago

This is unbelievable. Why isn't some lawyer taking up his case ? Surely this has been cruel and unusual punishment.

grumpyoldlady, Maryland, about 5 hours ago

This guy is not a violent offender and should never have been in prison in the first place. He "stole" his father's tools, left to him in his father's will. Unbelievable.

Imacul8drm, Any Town, United States, about 5 hours ago

Ridiculous.

Madrarrua, Dallas, United States, about 5 hours ago

Sick!! poor man . Killers are free in some states after 25-30 years. Another 6 months of hell

Cherry Pie, Los Angeles, United States, about 5 hours ago

America disgusts me, it's law enforcement disgusts me, it's politicians disgust me. Land of the free huh?

Old Salt, Chicago, United States, about 5 hours ago

The animals that call themselves 'prison guards and wardens' should be locked up... Those people are worse than ISIL...

Que Locura, right there, United States, about 6 hours ago

This is a travesty. Those tools were his so why on earth was he charged with theft to begin with?

Cliff, Detroit, about 7 hours ago

Reading about his ordeal is bad enough, but you need to see the documentary they did on him. Hard to believe the system of justice could have allowed such a miscarriage of justice - and the State's crime continues to this day.

Best in the west, Pdx, United States, about 7 hours ago

He stole some tools

Cliff, Detroit, about 7 hours ago

The only reason they want to keep him in prison is because, despite every thing they've done to him, they cannot defeat his inner strength and determination. It's cruel and unusual punishment, and it is very personal. Some day, some group of lawyers will "break" the system that has failed to "break" him and he'll finally be freed from prison. If there is any justice, he'll also be compensated for the years he's wrongly been imprisoned. Gotta be worth at least \$100,000 a year, which is what he could have earned with his intelligence and training. Hope it's soon.

tornadobelt, Kansas, United States, about 7 hours ago

Oh for crying out loud. Let him out and get him a job as a lock smith.

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The Woman Who Makes Prosthetic Pinkies for Ex-Yakuza Members

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vice.com

Written by Emiko Jozuka

February 9, 2016 // 07:00 AM EST



Yukako Fukushima has been helping ex-yakuza rehabilitate for over a decade. Image: Emiko Jozuka In December, Mike visits Fukushima's salon to get his pinkie checked up. Image: Emiko Jozuka The yakuza often self-amputate their digits, but sometimes they ask for assistance. Image: Emiko Jozuka Yukako Fukushima gives Mike's prosthetic pinkie a check up. Image: Emiko Jozuka The prosthetic fingers allow ex-yakuza members to feel at ease when out in public. to Image: Emiko Jozuka Mike has one prosthetic finger for winter and another tanned one for the summer. Image: Emiko Jozuka

without worrying about what they'd think."

"*Yubitsume*"—finger shortening—is a ritualistic form of self-amputation undertaken by members of the Japanese mafia or *yakuza* to atone for mistakes. The practice dates back to the 1700s, when gamblers known as *bakuto* would accept a person's severed finger in order to settle a gambling debt. The little finger on the left hand was chosen as its removal hampers a person's grip on their sword (*katana*), weakening them as an opponent.

In the 20th century, *yakuza* organizations adopted this practice. When lower-ranking members break the strict *yakuza* honor code and are deemed punishable by a higher-ranking *yakuza*, they will sever their left finger with a knife just above the top joint. In 1993, a government survey found that 45 percent of *yakuza* members had severed digits, with at least 15 percent having gone through the act twice. The pinkie piece is usually presented to their organization's *oyabun* (boss), wrapped in cloth, as a sign of repentance. If infractions accrue, the *yakuza* in question will continue down the joints of the left finger, gradually moving onto the little finger on the right hand. Further misdemeanors are met with death.

When "Mike" spotted a newspaper advert for a clinic making prosthetic fingers in the 90s, he thought it was a scam. But the ex-yakuza member had booked himself a consultation within the hour. For almost a decade, a stumpy pinkie on his left hand had marked out his previous allegiance to the criminal world, preventing him from leading a normal life.

A fake little finger, he thought, sounded outlandish, but it was worth a shot. It might allow him to disguise his past—and help shield against Japanese society's prejudiced view of ex-yakuza members in search of redemption.

"I wasn't sure if it would work," Mike told me, "but I really wanted to meet people

In recent years, stringent crackdowns on the yakuza—organized criminal gangs who engage in loan sharking, drug and sex trafficking—and a steady decline in their numbers have seen the practice of yubitsume decrease. But those with missing pinkies are permanently associated with gang life, and in a country where deeply entrenched stigmas around the organization prevail, something as subtle as a detachable fake finger could in some ways help assist fingerless ex-yakuza in reintegrating into society.

But it doesn't always mean that these ex-yakuza will permanently shake a life of crime.



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"Mike," who requested I not use his real name, didn't know what to expect when he arrived at the clinic. He imagined he might be met with the stifling formality and red tape that he'd experienced every time he went to sort out his papers at the municipal office in Osaka city. Instead, he heard loud yelling reverberating through the building, and was surprised when a young woman with a shock of hair in her early 20s appeared to greet him.

The woman was Yukako Fukushima, a prosthetics maker, who—aside from making regular prosthetics—has for over a decade made hundreds of fake pinkies for ex-yakuza members wishing

to leave gang life behind and find regular jobs. Usually one of Fukushima's fingers costs 180,000 yen (\$1490), but she provides ex-yakuza in difficult financial situations with a discount.

Fukushima, now in her 30s, is a petite woman with a broad smile and booming laugh. She was born in Osaka, a prefecture in southern Japan. The area is home to the *Yamaguchi gumi*—the largest yakuza organization in the country. Twenty years ago, at the height of the Japanese economic boom, yakuza syndicates across Japan were more active. Disputes, said Fukushima, were common near the first clinic in the town of Tezukayama (now a high-class residential area), where she started her career as a prosthetics maker.

"They once threw explosives at someone's house near where I used to live," said Fukushima.

Interested in art and sculpture as a teenager, Fukushima described herself as a self-taught prosthetist. She discovered the profession by chance one summer day when she saw a man covering himself up with a large scarf at a clinic where she was training.

"I was young and I just asked him outright why he was so covered up when it was so hot,"

said Fukushima. The man revealed severe burns that had scarred his entire body and face, and left him without ears. Fukushima decided to help, coming up with a pair of DIY prosthetics that the man could put in place of his ears and use to hook up a mask that covered the lower part of his face.

Word spread of Fukushima's talents, and she soon found herself making prosthetic parts for others, including the yakuza. She drew on books, and studied cosmetics so she could make her prosthetics as realistic as possible.

"I taught myself how to start making prosthetics when I was 21. We still didn't have internet back then so it was hard to have access to information on prosthetics. I think my customers were my teachers," said Fukushima, who thought nothing of providing pinkies for ex-yakuza members in the early 1990s despite the stigma around them.

"I'm really not that intelligent, I just act on my impulses when I feel that people need help," she said.



Over a decade since his first meeting with Fukushima, Mike, a reticent man with an intimidating presence, sat comfortably with a steaming cup of coffee when I met him in the prosthetic maker's current work place, the Kobo Arte Kawamura Gishi. The clinic, littered with fake body parts, is tucked away in a small side street close to a vibrant indoor market in Osaka city.

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"I wondered why she sounded so angry back then," said Mike, turning to Fukushima, who sat to his left. "I was worried that I was just getting myself involved in a really big scam."

At the time, Fukushima's other yakuza customers initially thought that she was heading up a shady business, and that they too might get ripped off.

"Back then, there weren't many women in this profession, and I guess they weren't expecting to be treated by one," said Fukushima, laughing heartily. "That wasn't me being angry back then either. I'm just naturally loud and I say what I think."

Since getting his first prosthetic pinkie from Fukushima at the age of 32, Mike has followed Fukushima each of the three times she switched clinics. Every December, he drops by for a general check up on his prosthetic little finger, replete with wrinkles and a nail. It gives both

an excuse to exchange news on the other's life.

Mike was barely 20 when he joined the yakuza. Awed by their image and reputation, he knew little about the realities of gang life. But within three years, he knew he wanted out. So he left behind the tip of his pinkie, which his friend helped slice off, to atone for a broken promise and a chance of life away from the yakuza. Usually the yakuza self-amputate their pinkies, but sometimes they ask for assistance. Mike declined to comment on the circumstances that led to the act, but he told me that nobody ordered him to sever his little finger; he just felt an unspoken pressure to do so.

"It didn't hurt," he said. "It was probably all the adrenaline."



Mike hoped to rebuild his life.

"I wanted to work and return to a normal way of life. I knew that I would be looked at strangely and unable to do so if I didn't have a little finger."

There was, however, no smooth exit plan from the life of crime for those missing a left pinkie. Unable to find a job, he ended up joining a right-wing Japanese organization and spent the rest of his 20s shouting slogans and trying to rouse interest in extremist ideology.

Under the soft light in Fukushima's consultation room, only an attentive observer would detect Mike's prosthetic

pinkie as a fake. Fukushima's prosthetics are tailored to her client's exact needs and skin tone, and Mike's appears just like his remaining digits. Most ex-yakuza will need their pinkies firstly for job interviews as they are likely to have their hands on their laps. Different social occasions such as drinking parties (*nomikai*) will require them to have either darker or lighter finger shades depending on whether they have their hands lowered (causing blood to flow down the arm and turn the finger redder), or raised (causing blood to flow away from the hand, reducing the redness).

Each of Fukushima's clients receives a consultation session, followed by a meeting where their fingers are moulded and skin tones decided before the mould is made and colors pasted in. Fukushima would not reveal the material that she used, but said that she uses red, blue and yellow to make over 1000 different skin tones, kneading in the shades so that if a customer scuffs their finger, the color underneath remains the same. The fingers are ready within around two months. Everyone is expected to respect the waiting list. Fukushima has a

strict no-bribes policy.

Mike has two sets of fake fingers: one lighter shade for the winter, and another tanned shade for the summer.

When Fukushima first started making prosthetics for people, she didn't expect to see a steady increase in members of the yakuza seeking her services. She was one of the earliest to offer it, and she started out in the profession when it was largely male-dominated.

Despite severe societal prejudice against the yakuza, she had no qualms in treating them. However, she found her initial exchanges with them challenging.

"There's this perception of yakuza being wealthy. Even I thought that they'd have lots of money in their purses," said Fukushima. "But I came across customers who didn't pay or just legged it after they got their treatment. I got so annoyed that I asked them why the hell they weren't paying me, seeing as I wasn't treating them any differently to my other patients."

It turned out that many of Fukushima's ex-yakuza clientele had lost their money once they'd quit the organization, and found it impossible to find employers to take them on owing to their deficient digits.

"At the time, it wasn't widely known that former yakuza who left the crime syndicate had no home, and were often still being hunted by other gang members. This made it really hard for them to rebuild their lives," said Fukushima, who explained that employers were unlikely to take on the risk of hiring an ex-yakuza for fear of violence and scaring away customers.

"The ex-yakuza who come to my clinic wear pinkies for others, whereas people who lost their fingers due to accidents wear prosthetics for themselves."

In the early 1990s, when Fukushima first started making fake fingers for the ex-yakuza, social support for former yakuza members wishing to reform did not exist. Society showed little compassion toward the predicament of recent yakuza drop outs, and Fukushima was initially investigated by local police forces who thought she was colluding with criminal organizations. Things improved for her when the Anti-Bouryokudan Law took affect in March 1992, and the Osaka police established an ex-yakuza support council (*ridatsu shien*) in December 1992.

There is a difference, said Fukushima, between the public's response toward people who have purposely inflicted harm on themselves, and those who have suffered an injury owing to circumstances beyond their control.

"If you lost a finger in an accident, society would feel sympathetic toward you. But if you cut off your own finger, as it's your own decision, nobody pities you. In the end, the ex-yakuza who come to my clinic wear pinkies for others, whereas people who lost their fingers due to accidents wear prosthetics for themselves," explained Fukushima. "That's the real difference between the feelings between people and society, between the concepts of fear and

compassion.”



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Fukushima recognizes that providing fake fingers does not secure a life away from crime for ex-yakuza members, but she explained that it creates conditions whereby former yakuza can blend into society and at least attempt to rebuild their lives. So she reduced the price of the prosthetic fingers, letting her yakuza clientele pay in monthly installments once they secured jobs.

receiving the award, she has experienced a sea change in both public opinion and her family's reaction toward the work she does.

In 2014, Fukushima was bestowed a Women's Challenge Award from the Japanese government's gender equality bureau for her entrepreneurial drive and her sustained efforts to help ex-yakuza members rehabilitate and reintegrate back into society. Since

“My parents, friends, and even the guy I was dating used to cry for me. We were supposed to get married but he couldn't cope with my job and we split up,” said Fukushima, who is now happily married and has a child. “They have more understanding toward what I'm doing now.”

It has not always been easy. Throughout her career, Fukushima has dealt with irate yakuza who have thrashed around her practice and threatened her. Some have tried to pay her extra in order to get their fake fingers faster. But she stood her ground.

Over the years, Fukushima has celebrated the successes of those who have managed to cut their ties with the yakuza, and felt saddened when things fall apart.

“There was one man who came to see me to tell me that he was getting married to someone he loved very much. He wanted to come clean about his past to his fiancé's parents,” said Fukushima. “I got a call a few months later: their engagement had been called off, and his fiancé's parents had forced her to get an abortion.”

With the help of Mike and a network of other veteran ex-yakuza, Fukushima has introduced others who have recently quit the organization to a support network that can provide them with advice or even a job.

Remaining on the straight and narrow is, however, not possible for all. Some relapse into a life of crime, and once in awhile, Fukushima will receive letters from prison from former



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customers apologizing for their misdeeds.

"It's hard to get everything 100 percent right, but if you can help just one person, then that person might go on to have a family or be happy in some other way," said Fukushima.

"If I can make ten fingers and the owner of one of those manages to rebuild their lives, it makes me want to continue."

In the small consulting room, Mike puts his prosthetic pinkie back on.

"I feel emotionally freer when I'm wearing this prosthetic," he said. "I wear it all the time."

Mike is so attached to his fake little fingers that he often forgets to take them off, causing them to wear down more quickly. He kept the first ever fake pinkie he received from Fukushima as a memento.

"I still have that finger," revealed Mike, laughing. "It's in a really bad state."

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Provincetown's Black Flash



A beach front art class in 1940. Could some of the summer visitors, such as these, been responsible for the panic that gripped the town in 1939, or was something more sinister at work?

Shadowy figures have long haunted the mentionable, the human psyche has a habit of the unknown. Several such figures have been the Monster, and Spring-Heeled Jack, to name a terror to the rogue's gallery, this one known

The year was 1939. The winds of war were blowing. German submarines lurked off the Atlantic coast. The likelihood of war. It was out of this atmosphere that the village was tormented for a few weeks that still has people scratching their heads:

A figure in black

School children on their way home from class

that a tall figure, dressed all in black, would appear from nowhere and disappear just as fast. Huge, and impossibly fast, it seemed the creature aimed only at the children. It didn't take the accounts very seriously, at least until one of their own saw the ghostly figure.

Mary Costas was walking by town hall one night in October when a tall figure dressed all in black jumped out of the bushes in front of her. The creature hopped high. The frightened Costas ran into a nearby coffee shop for help. A group of men who ran outside to look for the creature found nothing. Police who arrived found Costas being genuinely frightened.

After Costas' terrifying encounter, several more townspeople saw the monster. Reports were scattered all over town; as police received a call from a residence running through their yard, another call would simultaneously come in from the opposite end of town. Even police began to believe the monster might be real. Names: the Provincetown Phantom, the Devil of the Dunes, and the name by which the apparition is known to history, the Black Flash.

A story grown with each telling

The Black Flash made radio news broadcasts around the world. It was the perfect sort of story for the radio broadcasts of the day, where news programs were dramas. The story grew and grew with the telling; the monster went from merely jumping out to frighten people to full on attacking hapless townspeople, spring-heeled Jack. Here it is good to note how much the story has grown from those early reports. It entered into the folklore of the area and became more and more on various sites about the monster and its attacks come from this oral tradition. The story as it exists today claims that the monster tormented Provincetown that it was only stopped after children poured a pot of hot water on its head. In reality, the panic only lasted a few weeks in the fall of 1939.

As for Provincetown residents at the time, while a significant minority lived in fear of the Devil of the Dunes, most wrote the whole affair off as hogwash. The track star, or perhaps a left over tourist looking to stir up trouble. Chief of Police Anthony Tarvers claimed the Black Flash was simply four teens playing a trick. They wore a long cape and a flour sifter over their face; the device's handles were the large silver ears that victims reported. The case, it seems, was closed.

A case of collective delusion?

While it would seem that the initial reports of the Black Flash were, as the Chief of Police stated, the work of four bored teens playing a Halloween prank, what exaggerated abilities of the monster? After all, it would be difficult for anyone to make the leaps attributed to the monster with another person on his shoulder said to sprint.

It seems likely that, while a group of pranksters started the panic, from there the idea of a monster spread to those who were vulnerable: uneducated adults. In cases of mass hysteria and collective delusion, these are the groups who are primarily affected. This can be seen in such cases as the Halifax Slasher, the man who struck Tanganyika in the 1960s.

The environment was ripe in Provincetown for such a panic to take root. Nazi subs lurked in the Atlantic, and news from overseas made the possibility of Axis more possible. America was still in the midst of the Great Depression as well. These stressors provided fertile ground for a collective delusion to take root. It proved to be hardy, as it moved from an odd incident that burned out within a few weeks in 1939 to a part of Rhode Island folklore, one likely to inspire chill decades to come.

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This entry was posted in Mysteries and Strange Occurrences and tagged collective delusion, mass hysteria, the black flash on February 21, 2016 by Andre

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Thursday 3 March 2016

Psychiatric hospitals filling up with time travellers sent back to kill Donald Trump

<http://newsthump.com/2016/03/03/psychiatric-hospitals-filling-up-with-time-travellers-sent-back-to-kill-donald-trump/>

Psychiatric facilities across the United States are at breaking point after the number of people claiming to be sent from the future to stop Donald Trump reached epidemic proportions.

New research has shown that every ten minutes someone claiming to be from the future sent back to save humanity is admitted to a hospital somewhere in the US.



Dr Simon Williams told us, "We're struggling to cope to be honest. We're constantly booking people in who've been arrested before telling police they are on a secret mission from the future, and have to save the world.

"It used to be 'I'm Napoleon' – but not any more.

"To say you've been sent from the future to stop Donald Trump is a very unusual psychological delusion, especially to be suffered by so many people, with such a similar stated aim.

"They all say the same thing, they come from a future of riots, war, famine, the collapse of civilised society, and then being sent back to 'make it all right'.

"I mean, it's almost like they're telling the truth and for some unknown reason the future is getting increasingly desperate to stop the rise of Donald Trump and the end of the world he will inevitably bring about.

"He can't be that bad, can he?"

Pyrénées-Orientales: the feast of the bear soon to Unesco heritage? - 3 France Languedoc-Roussillon

PS Published 02/22/2016 | 3:08 pm

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Pyrénées-Orientales: the feast of the bear soon to Unesco heritage?

Three villages of Pyrénées-Orientales still celebrate the bear's party. Disguised as animals, men lancé an attack of the villagers. A tradition That Could be included in Intangible Heritage of Unesco. Reportage Sunday Prats-de-Mollo.



The feast of the & #039; Bear in Prats-de-Mollo February 21 2016 © F3Languedoc

© F3Languedoc The festival of the bear in Prats-de-Mollo February 21, 2016.

A Prats-de-Mollo, Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans and Arles-sur-Tech , we celebrate the feast of the bear. "Since forever" , They Say. Three men of the town griment black, are of SHEEPSKINS and chase the People to mark the black. Pyrénées-Orientales: the feast of the bear soon to Unesco heritage?



Three villages of Pyrénées-Orientales still celebrate the bear's party. Disguised as animals, men lancé an attack of the villagers. A tradition That Could be included in Intangible Heritage of Unesco. Reportage Sunday Prats-de-Mollo. Report: A. Cheron, F. Savineau

Unesco

A tradition to celebrate spring goal aussi Commemorating the hunting of bears That made Them ounce . **Residents vallespir** As for spectators, it Delivers tips to enjoy the party: "arrives early to see men dress up. They forget Themselves and Become animal."

Resident of the village or not, everyone can Participate. The ritual Celebrated Each year May



soon be reconnu by Unesco,
the record to enter the
intangible heritage of
humanity shoulds be
Submitted end of 2016.

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 original text

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The Telegraph

Friday 26 February 2016

Queen's pigeon rescued after fleeing royal loft

Scottish SPCA staff find exhausted bird and return it to Sandringham estate in Norfolk, 407 miles away



A racing pigeon belonging to Queen Elizabeth II, which was rescued after it was found lost in East Lothian near Edinburgh. It has now been returned to the royal loft at Sandringham estate in Norfolk. A racing pigeon belonging to Queen Elizabeth II, which was rescued after it was found lost in East Lothian near Edinburgh. It has now been returned to the royal loft at Sandringham estate in Norfolk. Photo: SPCA/PA

Animal welfare officers who rescued a lost pigeon in East Lothian were surprised to discover it had a royal owner - the Queen.

The Scottish SPCA was called when the exhausted bird was spotted at Traprain Terrace in Haddington on February 2.

Staff traced it back to its owner and the racing pigeon has now been returned to the royal loft 407 miles away at Sandringham estate in Norfolk.

The charity's animal rescue officer Connie O'Neill said: "I've rescued many pigeons during my career with the Scottish SPCA but this was certainly a first for me.

"I was really excited when I found out it was one of the Queen's racing pigeons.

"We were able to identify where the pigeon had come from using the ring number on its leg and arrangements were made for it to be collected.

• Cat and pigeon battle it out in garden

"The poor bird was exhausted and it was a cold, dark and windy night when it was found. Thankfully someone contacted us as it would have been very easy prey for a cat.

"It's quite common for racing pigeons to lose their way and become too tired to take off again. I'm really glad we were able to help in this instance."



The royal pigeon's 407-mile flight, if it flew direct

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Massachusetts plans rattlesnake colony on uninhabited island | Fox News

BOSTON —

foxnews.com

Published February 22, 2016

Associated Press

A plan by the state to establish a colony of venomous timber rattlesnakes on an off-limits island in Massachusetts' largest inland body of water has some rattled by visions of dangerous serpents slithering through the surrounding woods, attacking hikers, fishermen and hunters.

Those are completely irrational fears based on the public's aversion to snakes, said Tom French of the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, who's directing the project at the 39-square mile Quabbin Reservoir and representing the state at a public meeting Tuesday to address the concerns.

French said he's received several emails and phone calls from worried residents who fear the snakes will escape the island.



FILE— In this Sept. 2008 handout file photograph from the Mass. Div. of Wildlife and Fisheries, a timber rattlesnake slithers across a flat rock in Western Massachusetts. A plan by the state to start a colony of venomous timber rattlesnakes on an off-limits island in Massachusetts' largest drinking water supply is under fire. (Bill Byrne/The Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife via AP)

Expand / Contract

FILE-- In this Sept. 2008 handout file photograph from the Mass. Div. of Wildlife and Fisheries, a timber rattlesnake slithers across a flat rock in Western Massachusetts. A plan by the state to start a colony of venomous timber rattlesnakes on an off-limits island in Massachusetts' largest drinking water supply is under fire. (Bill Byrne/The Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife via AP)

"People are afraid that we're going to put snakes in a place of public use and that they are going to breed like rabbits and spread over the countryside and kill everybody," he said.

There are only about 200 of the endangered snakes indigenous to Massachusetts left in five scattered pockets from greater Boston to the Berkshires, French said. Loss of habitat and human-caused deaths means they could disappear altogether, which is why the Quabbin project is so critical.

The plan to establish the snakes on Mount Zion — at more than 1,400 acres, the largest island in the reservoir — has been in the works for several years. A handful of snakes will be raised at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, Rhode Island, and placed on the island in a couple more years when they are mature enough to survive in the wild.

The project has received the endorsement of Gov. Charlie Baker.

The public's concerns stem from the fact that rattlesnakes can swim and the island is connected to the mainland by a pair of narrow causeways, French said.

Bob Curley, an avid hiker, isn't opposed to the rattlesnake preservation effort; he just doesn't think the Quabbin is the place to do it. Even though Mount Zion is off limits to the public, he's concerned the state will use the snakes as an excuse to shut off public access to areas around the reservoir about 65 miles west of Boston.

"When the inevitable happens and there is an interplay between a hiker and a rattler, what's the repercussion?" said the Athol resident, who said his dog was bitten by a rattlesnake last summer. "Are the trails around the Quabbin going to be shut down?"

There is no plan to deny public access to the Quabbin, and concerns that snakes will leave the island and threaten humans are unfounded, French said.

Rattlesnakes are timid and only strike out when provoked. There have been no documented rattlesnake bite deaths in Massachusetts since colonial times, he said. He can't even recall an accidental bite in his 32 years with the state agency even though Massachusetts' rattlesnake populations live largely in public lands that get heavy foot traffic.

On Mount Zion, the snakes will be safe from human interference, have ideal places to hibernate and plenty of mice and chipmunks to eat.

"We want one place where the impact of people is not part of the equation," French said.

The state's message appears to be getting out.

Nancy Allen, chairwoman of the selectboard in Petersham, a town on the eastern shore of the reservoir, said she heard from fearful residents when the plan became public, but those fears died down once people educated themselves about the project.

"Once they started to look into the facts, people started to change their minds," she said.

Peter Mallett, a recreational fisherman who lives in New Salem, a town on the Quabbin's western shore, opposed the snake project at first, but changed his mind after digging deeper.

"People are just petrified of snakes," he said.

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Real-Life Ghostbusters Claim To Talk To Spirits At Abandoned Asylum

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Real-Life Ghostbusters Claim To Talk To Spirits At Asylum

Who you gonna call?

03/04/2016 05:13 pm ET | Updated 7 hours ago

• Lee Spiegel Writer, Editor



Destination America "Paranormal Lockdown" investigators Katrina Weidman and Nick Groff in front of the abandoned Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in Weston, West Virginia, where they attempt to "talk" to spirits.

As anticipation builds for this summer's remake of "Ghostbusters," real-life spirit investigators -- *and* their alleged quarry -- arrive on your television screens tonight in Destination America's "Paranormal Lockdown."

Throughout this six-part series, Nick Groff (Travel Channel's "Ghost Adventures") and Katrina Weidman (A&E's "Paranormal State") confine themselves in some of

America's more creepy and terrifying places for 72 continuous hours.

"We do a tremendous amount of work on the history, the background, the deaths there, or anything dramatic that took place at a location," Groff said on the "Paranormal Lockdown" site. "We're going into locations to try to document groundbreaking evidence of the paranormal -- something that hasn't been discovered yet. That is my mission. I'm looking for something that will revolutionize the way we think."

In the following video from the first episode of "Paranormal Lockdown," Groff and Weidman find themselves in the abandoned Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in Weston, West Virginia, where they appear to have a "conversation" with spirits from the beyond.

The hunt to prove, once and for all, that ghosts exists -- or to answer the deeper question of whether humans somehow survive physical death -- also takes Groff and Weidman into a Kentucky flophouse, an Ohio Victorian mansion, and other supposedly haunted locations.

"If we could capture an entity -- a solid figure on camera -- with the high technology that we have now that we're using, then possibly we can discover something new," Groff said.

"Paranormal Lockdown" premieres Friday, March 4 on Destination America at 10 p.m. / 9 Central. Check your local listings.



Courtesy of Fortean Picture Library

Ghost Dog At A Tea Party

In 1916, retired Scotland Yard Inspector Arthur Springer took this picture in Tingewick, Buckingham, England. At the moment he captured the photograph, there was reportedly no dog in the frame at all. Courtesy of Fortean Picture Library
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Folk Art Relics from the Golden Age of America's Secret Societies

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Sensitive to Art & its Discontents

Folk Art Relics from
the Golden Age of
America's Secret
Societies

by Allison Meier on February 18, 2016



Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art from the Kendra and Allan Daniel Collection' at the American Folk Art Museum (all photos by the author for Hyperallergic unless noted)

A strange visual language developed from the 18th to the 20th century behind the closed doors of American secret societies. It's syntax is made up of all-seeing eyes, ominous skulls, hourglasses, arrows, axes, and curious hands holding hearts. Each of these icons was deeply symbolic for the thousands of people — mostly men — who participated in rituals of borrowed meaning, where ancient Egypt, biblical Christianity, and some homegrown amusements like wooden goats on wheels met the rise of American folk art. The American Folk Art Museum's (AFAM) *Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art from the Kendra and Allan Daniel*

Collection examines this often hidden history through its arcane artifacts.



Unidentified Man in Independent Order of Odd Fellows Regalia, Artist unidentified (United States, 1840–60), quarter-plate daguerreotype, 4 3/4 x 3 3/4 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum) (click to enlarge)

Mystery and Benevolence was curated by Stacy C. Hollander, chief curator and director of exhibitions at AFAM, and Aimee E. Newell, director of collections at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library. It features over 200 objects recently donated to the museum by Kendra and Allan Daniel, who spent three decades buying up the once-secretive art. Installed in the museum, the objects are an exuberant display of the "golden age" of Masonic and Odd Fellows objects, when American decorative and folk art merged with the need for a sense of belonging in the new country.

"After becoming an independent nation in the 1780s, America was seeking to establish its own cultural identity; Freemasonry offered a source of images that resonated with the new nation's values of equality and liberty," Newell writes in the accompanying catalogue. "Freemasonry's

visual language and American style began to intersect almost as soon as victory over the British was declared, and continued to adapt as the nation grew and the fraternity evolved. ”

Much of the exhibition contextualizes this long-hidden art in the history of the societies, such as their charity work. The Odd Fellows, formed in 18th-century London, were organized as a benevolent group to support the sick, orphans, and those who died without money for a funeral. One of their mission statements is proclaimed in red and gold on a large wooden sign: “Bury the Dead.” There are also axes indicating how the Odd Fellows saw themselves as “pioneers in the pathway of life”; staffs topped with a heart in the hand were a reminder to be open to others.

Similarly, even the more ghoulish imagery had some meaning connected to charity, and selflessness. The skulls, hourglasses, and skeletons holding shields painted with the word “fidelity” were all reminders of mortality, and how one’s brief time on earth could be better dedicated to others. Reverend Aaron B. Grosh wrote in 1853’s *The Odd Fellow’s Manual*: “Only the good or evil of our lives will survive us on earth, to draw down on our memories the blessings of those we have aided, or the contempt and reproach of those we have injured.”



Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence,' including items related to funerary traditions

“The outward form of each symbol offers a different point of access, but in its context within the lexicon of the fraternity, deeper meanings are revealed to those for whom the symbols are signified,” Hollander writes in the catalogue. “In this, the art of fellowship is not dissimilar to the art of alchemy, its secret knowledge also protected by its practitioners.”

In *As Above, So Below: Art of the American Fraternal Society, 1850–1930*, recently published by the University of Texas Press, it’s noted that from 1890 to 1915, an “estimated one in five men belonged to at least one society.” Fraternal societies still exist, although their numbers have greatly dwindled. According to the Masonic Service Association of North America, there were 1,211,183 members in 2014.



Independent Order of Odd Fellows Archway for Ensenore Lodge No. 438, signed “W. C. Baptist” (Auburn, New York, 1919), paint and gold

The Masons are the country’s oldest established fraternal order, with numerous lodges founded in the 18th century across the US. In one painting on view at AFAM, their most famous member, George Washington, stands

leaf on wood with metal*Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence'*

proudly at a Masonic altar. The Odd



Independent Order of Odd Fellows Banner, Artist unidentified (United States, 1900–20), paint on canvas, with wood and metal, 88 1/2 x 71 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum) (click to enlarge)

Fellows soon followed and quickly gained an important membership of their own, as did other societies like the Knights Templar, Shriners, and Junior Order of United American Mechanics. All were mostly white, male, and protestant, albeit from across different economic classes.

The objects in *Mystery and Benevolence* are seductive with their strangeness and feel somehow accessible through the ordinariness of the materials. I remember visiting the Masonic Hall on 23rd Street in Manhattan, and the tour guide (a Mason) pointing out that all the grand architectural flourishes were fancy fakery. The Corinthian columns, the Renaissance murals, and the Gothic arches that adorned different meeting rooms were all plaster — beautifully painted, but mimicry of the exotic and ancient all the same.

Likewise, the objects in this exhibition are visually stunning, from a late 19th-century staff wrapped with a snake to a towering column topped with a globe. There are some truly masterful pieces, like an intricate marquetry table by James J. Crozier, yet for the most part, the artists remain unidentified and the closest an object gets to a precious material is in the application of some gold leaf on the edges.

These are rare artifacts of an occult culture, each a labor of love for their ritual purpose, not originally intended as art, but as a tool of connection through shared rites. The value of these pieces goes beyond their folk art status. They represent a clandestine history embedded within the story of the United States, where for decades a large percentage of its men would amble over to the local lodge after dark, have a drink (or several), don a scarlet robe, then ponder a skeletal memento mori — or take a ride on a wooden goat around the lodge room.

Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art from the Kendra and Allan Daniel Collection continues at the American Folk Art Museum (2 Lincoln Square, Upper West Side, Manhattan) through May 8.



Hand staffs in 'Mystery and Benevolence'



Independent Order of Odd Fellows Axe for Newtown Lodge No. 4440 (United States, 1850–75); Independent Order of Odd Fellows skull and crossbones plaque (United States, 1875–1900), paint and gold leaf on wood



Washington as a Freemason, Publisher unidentified (United States, late 19th century), oleograph on linen, 28 1/2 x 22 3/8 x 1 3/8 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum, photo by José Andrés Ramírez)

Hyperallergic welcomes comments and a lively discussion, but comments are moderated after being posted. For more details please read our comment policy.



Pair of Cherubim, artist unidentified (United States, 1900–25), metal with traces of gold leaf. They likely were once on a replica of the Ark of the Covenant.



Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence'



Odd Fellows axes in 'Mystery and Benevolence'



Independent Order of Odd Fellows Staff with Serpent, Artist unidentified (United States, 1875–1900), paint on wood, 53 x 5 x 4 3/4 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum, photo by José Andrés Ramírez)



Painting of a church and cemetery in 'Mystery and Benevolence'



Independent Order of Odd Fellows

Carpet, Artist unidentified (United States, 1875–1925), wool, 61 x 35 1/2 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum, photo by José Andrés Ramírez)



Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence'



Independent Order of Odd Fellows Tracing Board, Artist unidentified (United States, 1850–1900), oil on canvas, 33 1/4 x 39 1/2 x 2 1/8 in (courtesy American Folk Art Museum, photo by José Andrés Ramírez)



Installation view of 'Mystery and Benevolence'*America's Secret Societies: A New Book Probes Their Art and Mysteries**The Mysterious Folk Art of America's Secret Societies*

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Lucia Travaini

Saints and Sinners: Coins in Medieval Italian Graves*

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"... but here we are touching on a very obscure past, and we shall have to resign ourselves in advance to giving considerable place to hypotheses. The historian may legitimately make use of them, provided he does not put them forward as certainties".

March Bloch, *The Royal Touch* (p. 12)

Introduction

When discussing coin finds in Italian graves it is best to study the phenomenon across the entire medieval period, from the sixth to the fifteenth century. Only by comparing poorly documented periods with those for which the written evidence is more plentiful is it possible to appreciate continuities and disjunctures over time. It is also helpful to consider coins in graves in the wider context of the ritual use of coins. Few coins are found in ancient and early medieval graves compared to other artefacts. In the later middle ages, when graves did not normally contain grave-goods, an occasional coin is the only object that may have caused that grave to be recorded.

This paper will discuss grave finds of coins from different periods, but will make no attempt to give a full inventory of coins found in graves in medieval Italy. It will simply examine a number of cases and offer some tentative interpretations and also refer to non-Italian examples. Coins in graves are considered as "normal" by most archaeologists and numismatists, both for the middle ages and later periods. Folk-stories tell us about "dead man's treasures" and these are indeed found ecclesiastical and social historians have not yet taken these matters sufficiently into account.

There is also the question of the relationship between coins in graves and Christianity. From the beginning of the period under examination Christianity, albeit in a form perhaps best described as "immature", was already established in Italy, so what links can be made between religious belief and a coin in a grave? Coins in medieval graves have often been explained as a more or less conscious continuation of "Charon's obol": the traditional fee for the ferryman Charon who carried the souls of the dead across the river Styx. Even in Greek and Roman contexts, however, the term has been too loosely applied. It is only when one coin is found in the mouth that we are entitled to refer to it as a Charon's obol¹. It is therefore best to abandon this idea and consider coins in medieval graves within a wider framework. Coins in graves have been interpreted as offerings of the dead to the gods, offerings of the living to the dead², as a gift to the deceased to use in the

*This is a revised and much updated version of the paper read at the Third Cambridge Numismatic Symposium, dedicated to "Gods, Graves and Numismatics", 12-13 March 1999, organized by Mark Blackburn. I am very grateful to Giulia Barone and Neil Christie for reading a draft and for offering valuable comments. After the Cambridge symposium I discussed some aspects of my paper in a seminar on "Moneta e riti nel medioevo" for the Dottorato in Agiografia of the Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata", and I wish to express my warmest thanks to Sofia Boesch Gajano and Francesco Sforza Barcellona for their attention and advice. I am also most grateful to the anonymous referee who spent much time improving my text with valuable comments and suggestions.

¹ S.T. Stevens, 'Charon's obol and other coins in ancient funerary practice', *Phoenix* 45 (1991), pp. 215-29 (I am most grateful to Professor Donald T. Ariel for this reference); G.E. Thüry, 'Charon und die Funktionen der Münzen in römischen Gräbern der Kaiserzeit', in *Trouvailles monétaires de tombes*, Actes du dixième colloque international du Groupe Suisse pour l'étude des trouvailles monétaires (Neuchâtel, 3-4 mars 1995), eds O.F. Dubuis, S. Frey-Kupper and G. Perret (Lausanne, 1999), pp. 17-30. for grave coins in Hellenistic Crete: M.I. Stefanakis, 'An inexpensive ride? A contribution to death-coin rites in Hellenistic Crete', *QT* 31 (2002), pp. 171-89. The first Italian study to stress the presence of coins in 'Christian' (i.e. medieval) graves seen as possible 'Charon's obol' was C. D'Angela, 'L'Obolo a Caronte. Usi funerari medievali tra paganesimo e Cristianesimo', *Quaderni medievali* 15 (1983), pp. 82-91. The so-called Charon's obol has been discussed in two symposia both held in 1995. The first was held at Salerno in February 1995, and published as *Caronte. Un obolo per l'aldilà*, ed. R. Cantilena, *La Parola del Passato*, 50, nos 3-6 (1995): in this volume medieval graves are discussed by P. Peduto, 'Osservazioni sul rito in epoca medievale', pp. 311-18, and C. D'Angela, 'Contesti tombali tardoantichi e altomedievali', pp. 319-26. The second was published as *Trouvailles monétaires de tombes*.

² Stevens, "Charon's obol", p. 229.

responsible for the ceremony at the time of the survey, or by devout people who could have inserted them inside the tomb as long as it was accessible.

There was also a distinction between coins deliberately deposited inside a saint's tomb, at the time burial, and coins offered to the saint's tomb either by being placed on the altar over the tomb⁵⁸, or put inside when it was opened or else forced inside it. In the grave of St Francis of Assisi eleven pennies of Lucca, which would have been circulating in Central Italy at the time of his death in 1226, were found. There was also the ring and the beads of a necklace⁵⁹. They were found when the grave was opened in 1819 and their presence raises obvious questions. St Francis loved poverty and detested money. He even ordered his friars not to accept it⁶⁰. The saint's tomb remained accessible for some decades after his death before it was more securely sealed, and some of these coins may have been inserted by devout people in order to leave something of themselves near the saint. Alternatively the people who sealed the tomb may have left these coins, or even added some. The coins offered in this way were analogous to *brandea* as relics, pieces of cloth that, by virtue of having touched a holy place, became holy themselves⁶¹. As objects "offered" to a saint and placed as close to the body as possible, they constituted for the donor an extremely precious form of contact, more than just a simple offering and closer to the desire to be buried near a saint or his/her relics. Pilgrims offered coins to an altar either as gift of devotion or as a meritorious act⁶², but their gesture was sometimes so insistent, even violent in forcing a passage through to the tomb or the altar, as to suggest some other reason behind the offering itself: a reason related to a wish to leave a "personal memory".

I have meditated on this while watching tourists throwing coins into the Trevi fountain. Foreign tourist often throw coins of their own country, but some even choose personal objects, such as watches⁶³. Particularly keen tourists try to throw the coin as far as possible, behind the stone horses and statues, so that it cannot be retrieved too easily, in the hope that their own "sign" will remain attached to the monument. An invisible line, tracing the trajectory to the thrown coin, remains as a persistent tie between the donor and the receiver. The tourist believes that he/she may return to Rome, in the same way that the donor of a coin to a saint's grave believes his/her prayers will be heard more clearly once a special contact is established through the offering.

In 1750 the sarcophagus of Catervius in Tolentino cathedral was opened and examined. A contemporary report stated that coins and other objects such as rosaries and belts had been forced into the narrow space between the sarcophagus and its heavy lid, breaking the plaster seal so that the objects would touch the holy remains⁶⁴. The intention was probably to recover the rosaries and

⁵⁸ A miniature showing coins offered on the altar is reproduced in L. Travaini, 'Le monete del primo giubileo', in *Anno 1300 il primo giubileo. Bonifacio VIII e il suo tempo*, a cura di M. Righetti Tosti Croce (Milan, 2000), pp. 121-5. For coins on altars see also M. Illi, *Münzen in der Kirche: Bild- und Schriftquellen*, in *Trouvailles monétaires d'églises. Actes du premier colloque international du Groupe suisse pour l'étude des trouvailles monétaires* (Lucerne, 19 novembre 1993), ed. O.F. Dubuis and S. Frey-Kupper (Lausanne, 1995), pp. 153-60. Coins and candles offered on the tomb of St Louis are illustrated in the Great Sacristy glass window in St Denis. See G. Sommers Wright, 'The Tomb of St Louis', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 34 (1971), pp. 65-82.

⁵⁹ I. Gatti, *La tomba di S. Francesco nei secoli* (Assisi, 1983), pp. 108-9, 267 and pl. 11. I am grateful to Rosalind Brooke for this reference.

⁶⁰ F. Guadagni, *De invento corpore Divi Francisci Ordinis Minorum Parentis* (Rome, 1819).

⁶¹ R. Grégoire, *Manuale di agiologia. Introduzione alla letteratura agiografica*, 2nd ed. (Fabriano, 1996), p. 314; Heinzelmann, *Translationsberichte* (n. 23), p. 23.

⁶² See A. Frugoni, *Il giubileo di Bonifacio VIII*, ed. A. De Vincentiis (Bari, 1999), p. 124.

⁶³ Foreign coins make about 20% of the total. The fountain is cleaned every Monday and the coins are collected in bags, with Italian coins going to the City Treasury and foreign coins to the Red Cross. See L. Travaini, 'Le monete a Fontana di Trevi: storia di un rito', *RIN* 101 (2000), pp. 251-9.

⁶⁴ G. Alteri, 'Il sarcofago di Catervio', *BollNum* 26-27 (1996), p. 7: '... Vi si trovarono anche alcuni denari d'argento e rame buttati dentro all'Arca da devoti per la fessura che unisce il coperchio di sopra con l'Arca, qual fessura è chiusa con gesso nulladimeno spesso si trova aperta dalli devoti che ebbero a buttarvi dentro danari e medaglie o per calarvi dentro corone, cinture, cordoni o cose simili per farle toccare i corpi dei Santi come di fatto vi si trovarono molte corone, cinture, cordoni.' The three local saints in this sarcophagus were buried in the early fifth century, but they became objects of cult worship only in the twelfth century. Earlier surveys of the tomb took place in 1450, 1576, 1750, 1822 and 1992. In his catalogue Alteri describes 1,872 coins, dating from the thirteenth century to 1810, and two religious medals.

belts after they had come into contact with the sacred bones, but they accidentally slipped out of reach. Coins and other smaller objects were, however, deliberately left inside. They were the offering of devout donors who sought to establish a long-lasting tie of personal memory⁶⁵. In this case the insertion of coins in the sarcophagus was continued from the thirteenth century to 1810 and such coins cannot be distinguished from those deposited on the occasion of the surveys.

Coins have been used at various times as link between the divine and the human worlds in a form of exchange, of *do ut des*⁶⁶. A link between divine and human can be seen in offerings made to saints⁶⁷. Those who were devoted to a particular saint can be defined as his or her clients, in a relationship that was essentially feudal⁶⁸. The calibre of the offerings, however, was not based on monetary value. It is useful here to bear in mind the biblical parable where the poor widow's mite was considered far more valuable than the coins offered by the rich⁶⁹. This perhaps explain why precious coins were not usually deposited in graves: only small coins were appropriate because only the smaller denominations would have been used by the poor and the rich alike⁷⁰. These were the coins of everyday life, used for buying bread and for pious offerings, and they were therefore acceptable as "memory tokens"⁷¹. Gold and silver coins and other precious objects, on the contrary, were in some way seen as sinful and might have offended the saint or constituted a risk for an ordinary soul.

It was common to offer coins at an altar built over the grave of a saint, as we know from many examples, one of which is given by the coins found during excavations at the *Confessione* of St Peter's in the Vatican⁷². These were typically low-value coins, as cardinal Stefaneschi observed on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1300⁷³. We may compare the presence of coins "from all provinces" as described by Cardinal Stefaneschi to the *cumulus diversorum numismatum* offered by people gathered at Soissons in the tenth century for the translation of St Sebastian⁷⁴. The interpretation of foreign coins in any local or regional context is a complex task⁷⁵. The presence of a foreign coin in

⁶⁵ A number of seventeenth century coins were found inserted under the lid of the marble sarcophagus of San Giuliano in Rimini, showing the same obstinate determination to leave a coin as near as possible to the holy body, while many other coins dating from the sixteenth centuries were found in the urn. See G. Gerola, 'La ricognizione della tomba di S. Giuliano in Rimini', *Bollettino d'Arte* 5 (1911), pp. 106-20.

⁶⁶ C. Grottanelli, *Il sacrificio* (Rome and Bari, 1999). Marc Bloch gave many examples of the sacred role of coins. English royal cramp-rings in the middle ages had to be forged using the metal from melted coins that had been offered on the altar on Good Friday. This sanctified the metal and made it more likely to produce healing rings. See M. Bloch, *The Royal Touch. Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. F.E. Anderson (London and Montreal, 1973), pp. 93-8, 105. For the use of 'angels' as ritual offerings, see pp. 247-50.

⁶⁷ S. Boesch Gajano, *La santità* (Rome and Bari, 1999).

⁶⁸ E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (New Haven and London 1992), p. 160.

⁶⁹ Mark 12:38-44.

⁷⁰ Tournois pennies of Frankish Greece were found in the urn containing the relics of SS Menna and Bricio in Sant'Agata dei Goti (Benevento). See Matteo Egizio, 'Sopra alcune monete ritrovate fra le reliquie di alcuni SS. Martiri. Al Signor canonico D. Alessandro Puoti a S. Agata de' Goti', in *Opuscoli volgari e latini del Conte Matteo Egizio Napoletano Regio Bibliotecario* (Naples, 1751), pp. 11-14. I am most grateful to Dr Giuseppe Ruotolo for this reference.

⁷¹ See also the coins deposited in the urn of St Servolo in Trieste during the survey of 1929 (a nickel piece of 1918 and a copper one of 1927: not coins of 1929, but coins circulating in that year): G. Paoletti, 'Monete medioevali rinvenute nell'urna di San Servolo', in *La tradizione martiriale tergestina* (Trieste, 1992), pp. 385-92.

⁷² C. Serafini, 'Appendice Numismatica', in *Esplorazioni sotto la Confessione di San Pietro in Vaticano*, eds. B.M. Apollonj Ghetti et al. (Città del Vaticano, 1951), pp. 225-44, pl. 89-103. See also above, n. 22.

⁷³ '... In this Jubilee the altars of St Peter's gathered 30,000 gold florins and those of St Paul's 20,000, made up not of large sums of gold or silver, but of many petty local coins from all provinces'. See P. Fedele, 'Il giubileo del 1300', *Gli Anni Santi* (Rome, 1934), pp. 7-25. See also Travaini, 'Le monete del primo giubileo' (n. 58), pp. 121-5.

⁷⁴ H.-W. Nicklis, 'Nahmarktlandschaft und Fernhandelslandschaft. Über die unterschiedliche geldgeschichtliche Entwicklung in Frankreich und Deutschland (10.-12. Jhd.)', *HBN* 36/38 (1982/84), pp. 15-33, at p. 19.

⁷⁵ See L. Travaini (ed.), *Moneta locale, moneta straniera: Italia ed Europa XI-XV secolo*. The Second Cambridge Numismatic Symposium. Local Coins, Foreign coins: Italy and Europe 11th-15th centuries (Milan, 1999); P. Spufford, 'Local coins and foreign coins in late medieval Europe', in XII. Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress Berlin 1997, ed. B. Kluge and B. Weissner, vol. II (Berlin, 2000), pp. 1078-84; L. Travaini, *Moneta locale e moneta straniera nell'Europa medievale: risultati, problemi e prospettive della ricerca*, in *Circulation monétaire régionale et supra-régionale. Actes du troisième colloque international du Groupe suisse pour l'étude des trouvailles monétaires* (Berne, 3-4 mars 2000), ed. H.R. Derschka, I. Liggi and G. Perret (Lausanne, 2002), pp. 57-76. Debate on the interpretation

church offerings can have various meanings. It might have simply been the smallest denomination that the donor had available at the time, or it may reflect the intense circulation of foreign coins in the area or perhaps the drawing power of the church. It also might have been left as a token by a foreign pilgrim who travelled to the church and wanted to leave a personal trace at the shrine⁷⁶. A coin of Livonia from the fifteenth century found during excavations in the Vatican might well have been a personal token from a Livonian pilgrim. It would have been easy for a Livonian pilgrim to Rome to keep just one specimen of little value from home to offer upon arriving at his/her destination⁷⁷.

For the clerics in charge of gathering the offerings at Rome or elsewhere all coins had to be counted, and foreign coins eventually had to be exchanged against local ones. The religious authorities in charge of the survey of the tomb of a saint may have gathered a sample of the most recent coins offered to the tomb to deposit inside. It is, however, virtually impossible to differentiate between the two at least until medals were struck specifically for the purpose.

Coins were deposited in the foundations of temples in antiquity and foundation medals were purposely struck in the Renaissance. The reason for doing this may have been different in different periods, but when the great Torre del Mangia in Siena was built in 1325 coins were deposited in the foundation "for memory" during a great ceremony, as clearly stated by an anonymous contemporary chronicler⁷⁸. The coins officially offered as token of memory of the foundation of the tower were probably taken from the coins circulating in Siena at the time but they bore no special sign to differentiate them. We know of the "memory" value of these coins thanks only to the anonymous chronicler.

Few other cases are supported by such explicit chronicle references but archaeological evidence can sometimes tell us when a coin was intentionally meant to remain tied to a monument or a tomb. A Lombard silver coin was found deliberately inserted in the mortar inside a seventh century tomb in the church of St Zenone at Campione d'Italia⁷⁹. Other later examples of this sort are known from France. In the abbey church of Notre-Dame de Corheta, in the French region of Landes near the Pyrenees, a number of aristocratic tombs were excavated. One of these, the tomb of Adelaide of Anjou (d. 1215), contained three English short-cross pennies placed between stones. The tomb of Louis I d'Aspremont and of Isabelle of Lancaster-Somerset (d. c.1441-2) contained a Portuguese coin of Edward (1433-8) inserted, together with a reckoning counter, in the foundation of the tomb itself⁸⁰. A sign of personal memory attached to a coin offered in a grave can be seen in the coin found with the skeleton of Albert the Bear, margrave of Brandenburg (1124-70), whose

of 'church finds' has progressed particularly in Scandinavia and Switzerland: cf. Trouvailles monétaires d'églises, eds Dubuis and Frey-Kupper (n. 58).

⁷⁶ Foreign coins are sometimes found in saints' graves. On German coins found in the grave of Beato Arrigo in Treviso, see Saccocci, 'Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi' (n. 5), p. 94. On the Hungarian penny among Italian coins in the urn of St Silvestro at Nonantola, see F. Missere Fontana, *Tesoretto di monete tardo-medioevali rinvenuto a Nonantola nell'urna di S. Silvestro* (Nonantola, 1991), p. 20, no. 26; *ibid.* 'Due monete tardo-medioevali rinvenute a Nonantola nell'urna di S. Anselmo Abate, Sant'Adriano III papa, martiri Senesio e Teopompo e Sante Fosca e Anseride', in G. Marchesi, *I santi nonantolani. Cenni storici relativi alle reliquie conservate nella Abbazia di Nonantola* (Carpi, 1995), pp. 15-16.

⁷⁷ For the Livonian coin, see Serafini, 'Appendice numismatica' (n. 72), p. 243, no. 415. A register of the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena describes in detail coins of gold, silver and billon which were deposited by pilgrims in the hospital with the intention of recovering them on their return journey. In most cases these were the coins of the pilgrims' own countries and the pilgrims undoubtedly carried other such coins to Rome. On the coins deposited at Santa Maria della Scala, see L. Travaini, 'La moneta in viaggio', in G. Piccinni and L. Travaini, *Il Libro del pellegrino (Siena, 1382-1446). Affari, uomini, monete sulle strade d'Europa* (Naples, 2003), pp. 83-158.

⁷⁸ '... e l'operaio del chomuno di Siena mise in fondo di detta torre alquanta moneta per memoria di detta torre': see 'Cronaca senese dei fatti riguardanti la città e il suo territorio di autore anonimo del secolo XIV (a.1202-1331)', in *Cronache senesi*, eds A. Lisini and F. Iacometti (*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 15/6) (Bologna, 1939), pp. 129-30. I am very grateful to Gabriella Piccinni for this reference.

⁷⁹ E.A. Arslan, 'Mutamenti di funzione e di struttura degli stock monetari in Europa tra V e VIII secolo', 'Morfologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichità e alto medioevo', *Settimana di Studio Del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, 45 (Spoleto, 1998), pp. 379-460, at p. 444.

⁸⁰ In both cases the coins were contemporary with the death though not local. See M. Dhénin, 'Monnaies recueillies en l'Abbatiale Notre-Dame de Corheta', *Bulletin de la Société de Borda* (1979), pp. [1-13 of the offprint]. I am most grateful to Marc Bompaire, Michel Dhénin and Cécile Morrisson for their comments and references.

sarcophagus lies beside that of his wife Sophie (d. 1160) in the monastery of Ballenstedt. The coin in his tomb is a bracteate which bears the image of the standing margrave and his wife, issued in c.1155/60. Albert issued many different coin types from 1134, mainly bracteates, but this is the only one showing him together with his wife and this is the very type that was chosen to accompany him in his grave, now again near his wife, as depicted on the coin. Whoever was responsible for the selection of this coin must have understood the significance of the iconography to the context of this burial⁸¹. The bracteate depicts a human relationship which continued in the afterlife.

The interpretation of coins in the graves of ordinary people is probably even more difficult than that of those in the graves of important people. When coins are present in the late medieval graves there are often just one or two low-value, usually contemporary, pieces with the occasional single higher denomination⁸². In the late 1990s a number of fourteenth century rural cemeteries were excavated in the Salento, in southern Apulia⁸³. In some of these cemeteries coins were found systematically placed in the mouth of the dead person, while in others no coins were found at all. These differences in a small area during the same period are unexplained, but prove again how unsafe it is to generalise. Most of the coins were tournois pennies of Frankish Greece, which then circulated widely in southern Italy. It seems unlikely that the placing of the coins in the mouth of the deceased was the direct continuation of a classical tradition but there may have been some sort of a "restoration" of an ancient practice. Ancient coins are of course frequently found in Italy and would often have been kept as charms. In a fifteenth century tomb excavated at Impruneta near Florence, a halved Republican bronze coin was found in the right hand of a female skeleton⁸⁴.

Good Coins, Bad Coins?

From at least the thirteenth century, friars used a wide repertory of anecdotes, known as *exempla*, to enrich and clarify their sermons. By virtue of these *exempla*, collections of which were compiled from the thirteenth century onward⁸⁵, any late medieval man or woman in Italy knew that it was dangerous to have coins on their deathbed. A good death, as any good Christian knew, needed an uncompromising separation from earthly goods, which were a danger to the soul, and there was, therefore, no room for coins in the grave. This theme is also reflected in many medieval churches which display images of misers and usurers carrying their money-bags to hell or devils pouring gold from melted coins into their mouths⁸⁶. We are therefore faced with a contradiction. On the one hand,

⁸¹ V. von Röder, 'Über den im Grabe Albrechts des Bären zu Ballenstedt aufgefundenen Brakteaten', *Blätter für Münzfreunde* 37, 4/5 (1901), cols 2747-9; E. Bahrfeldt, *Münzwesen der Mark Brandenburg* (Berlin, 1889), p. 79, pl. I, no. 20.

⁸² See the two tournois pennies in a grave at Capaccio Vecchia, L. Travaini, 'Deniers tournois in South Italy', *The Gros Tournois*, ed. N.J. Mayhew, (Oxford, 1997), pp. 421-51, at p. 448 while there were 8 tournois pennies in a grave at Policoro (at p. 446). One Angevin penny was found in the woman's mouth in a grave at Carpignano, near Lecce, which also contained two earrings and a pot. See D'Angela, 'L'obolo a Caronte' (n. 1), p. 87. At Cerreto near Pescia (Pistoia), two graves contained respectively one provisino of the Roman Senate (c.1300-1404) and one quattrino of Lucca (sixteenth century). See M. Baldassarri, 'Reperti numismatici', in 'Storia ed archeologia di una chiesa rurale nella diocesi medievale di Lucca: San Lorenzo a Cerreto (Pescia, PT)', *Archeologia Medievale* 23 (1996), pp. 423-6. Single coins were found in a number of late medieval graves from the Ticino. One grosso of Milan of Luchino Visconti (1339-49) was found in a grave at Maroggia, one penny of Mantua (1150-1256) at Mendrisio, and one sesino of Milan of Filippo Maria Visconti (1412-47) at Stabio. See P. Donati, 'Monete medioevali da scavi archeologici nel Ticino', *QT* 4 (1975), pp. 295-8.

⁸³ P. Arthur, 'Il cimitero', in *Da Apigliano a Martano. Tre anni di archeologia medioevale (1997-1999)*, ed. P. Arthur (Martina Franca, 1999), pp. 51-3; A. Degasperi, 'Le monete', *ibid.*, pp. 37-9. I am most grateful to Paul Arthur for these references.

⁸⁴ S. Gelichi, 'Saggi archeologici presso la pieve di Santa Maria all'Impruneta (Firenze). Relazione preliminare', *Archeologia Medievale* 8 (1981), pp. 451-66, esp. pp. 455 and 458 (tomb 10). The author also gives two further examples of ancient coins in late medieval graves, one a Roman imperial coin in a tomb at Bologna, and the other a pierced silver drachm of Taras in a tomb in Apulia. See *ibid.*, p. 458, note 25.

⁸⁵ C. Bremond, J. Le Goff, J.-C. Schmitt, *L'«Exemplum»* (Turnhout, 1982; Typologie des Sources du Moyen Age Occidental, fasc. 40).

⁸⁶ See below Appendix of *exempla*. For church representations, see comments by M. Camille, *The Gothic Idol. Ideology and Image-making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 258-71, and the magisterial book by J. Baschet,

coins held a special position in the grave of St Francis and other saints, yet on the other hand they were seen as a tool of the devil. How can we understand this paradox? Perhaps the only solution is to look for some kind of distinction between “good” and “bad” coins, thus providing a compromise between the constraints of Church teaching and the beliefs and practices of ordinary people. Good coins, the ones most likely to pass through the hands of the poor, were small, low-value coins. These coins were good for alms, were accepted at saints’ shrines, were offered by pilgrims, and could be deposited in a grave. When a small coin was forced into a saint’s tomb by a devout pilgrim, its choice as an offering was probably based on it being thin and durable enough to fulfil the need for some kind of contact. It left the message “I was here and I left a memory of me, of my vow or of my prayer or request”. Such small coins were available to all, rich and poor, and thus were probably perceived as being inoffensive even in a saint’s grave.

Dead Man’s Treasure

If placing anything more than a few low-value coins in a grave was sinful, what is the nature of the “dead man’s treasures” of the late middle ages? For example, a purse of very poor quality small change was buried with a woman in a mass grave near Pisa in the mid-fifteenth century. It may have been intended as a loving gesture, as a “larger” offering than usual, rather than attachment to worldly goods⁸⁷. Or perhaps the purse was particularly dear to the deceased. Having died shortly after 1447, this woman, together with many other villagers, would probably have been familiar with the preaching of St Bernardino of Siena against superstition and usury⁸⁸.

More valuable hoards have certainly been found in late medieval graves, such as the “many fourteenth century gold ducats of Venice” under the armpit of a body discovered near Panzano (Modena)⁸⁹. This hoard seems to have been deposited with the body by design, but other cases, where the location of the bodies cannot be securely identified as a gravesite, must be treated with greater caution. High-value coins found in large numbers near human remains, in the absence of further archaeological details, can sometimes be regarded as the money of a traveller who died unexpectedly. This might have been the case with the one who died on the mountains near Pontremoli (Massa Carrara), found with at least 200 English pennies dating to the first decade of the thirteenth century⁹⁰. If this traveller was in company and his companions were “good”, they would presumably have buried him with just one or two coins, a symbolic *pars pro toto*, and spent the rest of the money on pious offerings for his soul. If they were “bad” they would have taken the

Les justices de l’au-delà. Les représentations de l’Enfer en France et en Italie (XIIe -Xve siècle) (Rome, 1993), p. 395: in Italian pictorial representations of the Last Judgment the typical punishment of misers and usurers is having coins or melted metal poured into their mouths. A list of such Last Judgements is given: Pisa, Camposanto, in the fresco by Buonamico Buffalmacco (1330-40); Florence, Santa Croce, c.1350; San Gimignano, Duomo, c.1400; Bologna, San Petronio, c.1410; Florence, San Marco Museum, panel by Fra Angelico; Campochiesa (Albenga), San Giorgio, c.1446; Bastia Mondovì, San Fiorenzo, c.1472; San Michele Mondovì, Madonna delle Piane, fifteenth century; Montegrazie (Liguria), Santuario della Madonna, 1483 (where the scene is accompanied by the inscription AURUM SITISTI AURUM BIBE, i.e. ‘you thirsted for gold, now drink gold’). Baschet also reproduced an illustration of hell that shows a devil pouring coins into a miser’s mouth, while another devil subjects a monk holding his money-bag to the same treatment.

⁸⁷ F. Redi, C. Amante Simoni, F.M. Vanni, S. Amici, ‘The cemetery of San Vito di Calci, near Pisa’, *Archeologia Medievale* 13 (1986), pp. 239-55. This is an excellent example of an excavation of a late medieval cemetery, situated next to a small church in a rural settlement. Walled graves were found inside and outside the church, but the most significant discovery, made in 1983, was a mass-grave under a layer of lime, with bodies buried without a coffin, aligned and on four layers, dated to the mid-fifteenth century. Women, men and children of all ages were buried with great piety and care, with arms crossed above their pelvis: most were dressed in a long buttoned shirt. Coins were also found: there are a few cases of single coins, but a parcel of 27 coins was found by the skeleton of the adult woman in the upper layer of bodies (no. 37). The parcel contained low-value coins, including 19 bianchi of Pisa issued before 1317, 2 sesini and 1 denaro of Milan of Filippo Maria Visconti (1412-47), 2 quarti of Amedee VIII of Savoy (1416-39), 1 petachina of Genoa of Doge Tomaso of Campofregoso (1436-42) and one of Doge Giano (1447), which is the latest coin.

⁸⁸ Bernardino preached from 1417 to his death in 1444 and Tuscany was his homeland.

⁸⁹ G. Gamurrini, ‘Loro Ciuffenna. Di un tesoretto di monete lucchesi scoperto in una tomba della diruta chiesa di S. Miniato’, *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* (1894), pp. 309-12.

⁹⁰ L. Travaini and M. Allen, ‘A short cross hoard from near Pontremoli, 1822’, *NC* 162 (2002), pp. 397-401.

whole lot for themselves. The presence of the coins suggests he fell in some inaccessible spot, or was alone.

It is also possible “the constraints of Church law and custom were perhaps less rigid in practice than in theory”⁹¹. Any “dead man’s treasure”, needs to be checked against the notion of coins that were considered good and bad for the soul. Were these parcels of gold coins or high-value silver really deposited with the body during the entombment, or were they hidden there later in completely different circumstances? After all, cemeteries have always been favoured places for hiding treasures, and thus far graves in late medieval Italy are insufficiently documented for us to know the original condition of burial. In many cases, we know only of the presence of a hoard near human bones⁹². In any event, the distinct possibility that precious coins, and hoards of them, were deliberately deposited in late medieval Christian graves at the moment of the entombment is something that ought to be of profound interest not only to numismatists but also to church historians, historical anthropologists, cultural historians of *mentalité*.

Conclusion

Many of the question posed at the outset remain unanswered. We do not know why the majority of graves in all periods of the Italian middle ages contain no coins, or why there is a minority that do. There must have been an element of tradition in early medieval graves, where we often find old Roman bronze coins together with other grave-goods, sometimes even in the graves of the wealthy. Coins were probably offered to complete the set of goods to be used in the next world, but the choice of the choice of an old bronze coin for a rich woman with gold ornaments points to some special significance given to the bronze coin. The low-value coins deposited in the tomb of St Ambrose at his first burial and again during the survey a century later were probably intended as pious offerings and tokens of memory. A change in burial practices occurred in the course of the eighth century and precious objects ceased to be deposited in graves while at the same time personal ornaments began to be listed in wills. Valuable objects were thus handed down to the living instead of being buried⁹³. Occasional coins were deposited, at first evidently only in the tombs of the wealthy, given the relatively high value of the new Carolingian penny. Coins begin to become more common in graves from the twelfth century onwards, when the fineness and value of the penny had diminished. The element of magic here may have been the same as in the early middle ages with, probably, some occasional individual memory tokens as well. Most of the coins seem to have been contemporary with the deposition, though we do not have a large number of graves to study. If there was a difference between early and later medieval graves, this was probably due to church teaching that coins could be “dangerous” for the soul, as illustrated by *exempla* of preachers from the thirteenth century. Of course, literary evidence may paint a picture that conflicts with actual practice, but medieval people could not entirely ignore the preacher, particularly on their deathbed⁹⁴. One or two-value coins, however, were probably not a risk. More dangerous from the perspective of Church teaching were silver and gold coins. It seems that “dead people’s coins” in the late middle ages had to be low-value coins, or else the dead would risk appearing unwilling to be separated from their possessions⁹⁵.

⁹¹ J. Gardner, *The Tomb and the Tiara. Curial tomb sculpture in Rome and Avignon in the later middle ages* (Oxford, 1992), p. 4.

⁹² The need for caution is emphasised by Suchodolski, ‘Absence of mind or magic?’ (n. 4), pp. 317-27.

⁹³ L. Passi Pitcher, ‘L’altomedioevo: caratteristiche generali’, *Riti e sepolture tra Adda e Oglio dalla tarda età del Ferro all’Alto Medioevo*, ed. L. Passi Pitcher, Rocca di Soncino (Cremona) 1990 p. 21.

⁹⁴ See the painting by H. Bosch of the miser at his deathbed, tempted by a small devil offering him a money bag (Kress Collection, now in the National Gallery, Washington).

⁹⁵ Coins continued to be deposited in post-medieval graves: the synod of Otranto in 1620 ordered *sub poena excommunicationis* that no coin was to be deposited with the dead (D’Angela, ‘L’obolo a Caronte’ (n. 1), p. 87) but it certainly did not end the practice. A parcel of 44 silver coins and one medal of Charles Borromeo was found in a seventeenth century grave in Sardinia: F. Guido, ‘Ritrovamenti monetali nella chiesa di S. Giovanni a Nulvi’, *Annotazioni Numismatiche* 28 (1997), pp. 622-7. In 1740 G. Catalani’s commentaries to the *Pontificale Romanum* reported that ‘against our faith some people put five coins on the breast of the dead for magic’: quoted by Gamurrini, ‘Loro Ciuffenna’ (n. 89), p. 312.

I have suggested that coins in saints' graves can be interpreted in terms of "memory". They may have been tokens of official memory, is sealed in an urn during an official ceremony; or they were private memory tokens deposited as signs of devotion or pilgrimage, particularly when they are obviously forced into the tomb and not simply deposited on the altar. Tokens of private memory established an invisible yet permanent tie between the donor and the receiver. It is important to observe that ordinary pennies could be used as tokens of memory, as an object of everyday use. There is an almost total lack of written evidence on the custom of depositing coins in medieval graves: hypotheses are therefore needed, and must be tested. For saints' graves the memory value seems proved by several cases of strict coincidence between the dates of coins or medals and the dates of burial or surveys.

Appendix. Some Exempla on Coins and Death

"A dying usurer ordered his wife and children to divide his money in three parts; one for his wife, one for his children, and one to be buried with him. Since the money buried was a lot, his children tried to recover it during the night. When they opened the grave they found devils pouring into dead's mouth his coins turned into burning coals. The children ran away in terror"⁹⁶.

"A dying man tells his treasure that, since it cannot follow him, he must send it away, and so he gives all he has to the poor"⁹⁷.

"In the grave of a usurer, who had insisted that a purse of money be buried with him, two toads are found feeding his mouth with money"⁹⁸.

"A nun hoards money which is found after her death and thrown into her grave; a few days later the grave is opened and the money is seen pouring into her mouth"⁹⁹.

"A corpse is flung on a dunghill because money has been found on it"¹⁰⁰.

"A miser's body is opened after death and the heart is found missing. It is found in a chest with is gold"¹⁰¹.

"At his death an avaricious master of a mint was seen in a vision being beaten on an anvil into the shape of a penny by a Jew"¹⁰².

"Before his death a rich, unrepentant man commands his servant to put all his valuables in a chalice so that he can drink them"¹⁰³.

"A hermit does not want to touch a coin because it is money"¹⁰⁴.

"A saintly monk dies and angels carry his soul toward heaven but their way is blocked by a gigantic obolus, representing a forgotten debt contracted while he was a secular; he was allowed to return to make restitution"¹⁰⁵.

"An abbot will not accept money, even for the poor"¹⁰⁶.

⁹⁶ Th. Crane (ed.), *The 'Exempla' or Illustrative Stories from the 'Sermones vulgares' of Jacques de Vitry* (London, 1890), p. 72. See also J. Le Goff, *La bourse et la vie. Economie et religion au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1986).

⁹⁷ F.C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum. A handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki, 1969), p. 375, no. 4962.

⁹⁸ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 369, no. 4889.

⁹⁹ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 260, no. 3351.

¹⁰⁰ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 101, no. 1255.

¹⁰¹ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 197, no. 2499. This story is illustrated in a painting attributed to Francesco Vecellio (c.1511-12) in the Scuola di Sant'Antonio in Padua in which St Anthony helps to find the heart of a miser inside his treasure chest. I am grateful to Marcus Phillips and Susan Tyler Smith for bringing the painting to my attention.

¹⁰² Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 29, no. 296.

¹⁰³ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 76, no. 930.

¹⁰⁴ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 92, no. 1141.

¹⁰⁵ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 123, no. 1496c.

¹⁰⁶ Tubach, *Index Exemplorum*, p. 261, no. 3360.

afterlife, as symbolic dowries constituting “a *pars pro toto* which transferred the belongings of the dead to the bereaved without having to offer a large number of grave gifts” and also as a means to avoid haunting³.

Most of the literature on the topic deals with early medieval graves, due to the greater interest of archaeologists in the documentary value of grave-goods, as against the virtual lack of grave-goods in later periods⁴. Later medieval graves need more attention. The study of the late Italian middle ages is either blessed or cursed, depending on one's view, by the quantity of written records. Because of the wealth of documentary evidence, historians of the period have tended to neglect non-literary evidence and the often different story it has to tell. Coins in saints' graves, for example, are by no means rare but they have hardly been noticed by modern church historians⁵. Later medieval graves have sometimes only been recorded because one or two coins were found with the remains. This superficiality precludes statistical analyses⁶. Although it was often not even noted whether the body was that of a man or a woman, the issue of gender may be important. In early medieval graves coins are more often associated with women and children, and this has also been noted in antiquity in some areas⁷. Does the presence of these coins show women as more superstitious than men? Did they invoke magic more? This is certainly suggested by St John Chrysostom's specific condemnation of women's use of magic in the fourth century⁸.

There are five main questions that need to be addressed in connection with coins in medieval Italian graves:

1. Why were coins deposited with ordinary people?
2. Why were coins deposited with saints and with other important people?
3. Why were coins *not* deposited in many or most graves?
4. Was there a difference between early medieval and later medieval graves? If so, why?
5. How were the coins deposited in graves selected? Were they currently circulating coins or not? If not how far removed in time and place?

In discussing these questions, I will focus on two main hypotheses:

- 1) coins offered as tokens of memory;
- 2) coins as a sin or as a possible danger for the soul.

We must be aware of two important issues. First, we do not know how common the phenomenon of coins in graves within a given population or region was. We only have some figures for early medieval cemeteries in which probably 5% of graves included a coin. Second, a distinction must be

³ K. Grönbjerg-Hansen, “Charon's fee in Ancient Greece? Some remarks on a well-known death rite”, *Acta Hyperborea*, 3 (1991), pp. 207-18, at pp. 213-16.

⁴ For comments on the rarity on good excavations of the late medieval cemeteries in Italy see the survey by H. Blake, “Sepulture”, *Archeologia Medievale* 10 (1983), pp. 175-97, though he does not mention coins. Given the cost of archaeological excavations, and the number of important archaeological sites in Italy, it is easy to see why there is less interest in excavating a late medieval cemetery containing just human bones and no grave-goods (but see below n. 87 for one remarkable exception at San Vito di Calci). For coins in early medieval graves outside Italy see S. Suchodolski, “Le début de l'obole des défunts en Europe centrale au haut Moyen Age”, in *Homenatge al Dr. Leandre Villaronga* *Acta Numismatica* 21-23 (1991-3), pp. 347-54, and id., “Absence of mind or magic? A few remarks on the so called small or single coin finds”, *QT* 25 (1996), pp. 317-27. Coins in graves have also been discussed in the literature of folklore. See *Münzen in Brauch und Aberglauben. Schmuck und Dekor “Votiv und Amulett” Politische und religiöse Selbstdarstellung* (Mainz, 1982), pp. 94-105. For coins in German graves over the period 750-1815, see W. Hävernich, “Münzen als Grabbeigaben 750-1815”, *HBZ* 27/29 (1973-75), pp. 27-51.

⁵ A. Saccocci, “Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi nell'Italia centro-settentrionale (VI-XV)”, in *Trouvailles monétaires de tombes* (n. 1), pp. 82-96, is a pioneering survey of coins in saints' graves, mainly based on evidence from the Veneto area.

⁶ For general comments on anthropological studies in Italy, or rather the lack of them, see the survey by M. Ginatempo, “Corpi e uomini tra scienza e storia: studi di osteo-archeologia umana per l'Italia medievale”, *Archeologia Medievale* 15 (1988), pp. 7-64.

⁷ Grönbjerg-Hansen, “Charon's fee in Ancient Greece?” (n. 3), pp. 210-11. Gender was also discussed in the papers read by Mark Blackburn and Tukka Talvio to the Cambridge Symposium in 1999.

⁸ H. Maguire, “Magic and Money in the Early Middle Ages”, *Speculum* 73 (1997), pp. 1037-54, at p. 1038.

made between the presence of one, or just a few, low-value coins and the inclusion of a parcel, a so-called “dead-man’s treasures”. Not only are these separate phenomena but there is also the question of the Church’s teaching, particularly if the coins were of high value.

The Early Middle Ages (Sixth to Ninth Centuries)

There are number of excavation reports and some good regional surveys for the early middle ages. Coins were deposited in late Roman, Ostrogothic and Lombardic, as well as Byzantine Italian graves⁹. During the course of the eighth century grave goods gradually disappeared from cemeteries as the deceased came to be buried with just a shroud, although, occasional deposits of coins persists¹⁰.

Extensive research on early medieval graves has proved that we can no longer simply associate the presence of grave-goods with pagan/Germanic peoples or their absence with Christians, and the same applies to coins¹¹. It has been assumed that Lombards and other Germanic populations derived the practice of depositing coins in graves from the Romans, dropping it gradually with the diffusion of Christianity yet the practice remained common among Christians¹². The graves at Nocera Umbra (Umbria, near Perugia) have more coins than those at Castel Trosino (Marche, near Ascoli Piceno), a site that is supposedly more indigenous in character and is more closely tied to the Byzantine world, but there are coins in graves in the cemetery of Cornus in Sardinia and in Sicilian graves of the ninth century¹³. We therefore cannot generalise.

Coins in graves have been used to date other grave-goods, sometimes without due caution, and certainly without considering the reason for their presence. For the Lombards, Neil Christie states that the “general lack of coin evidence in graves means that the chronological context for many of the invisible changes is not secure”¹⁴. A coin in a grave can only provide a *terminus post quem*. The selection of coins for depositing in graves may sometimes have depended on iconography or other reasons¹⁵.

⁹ See S. Uggeri Patitucci, “Indicazione numismatiche convergenti per la datazione delle ceramiche del nono secolo in Sicilia”, *Archeologia Medievale* 2 (1975), pp. 462-7. For the Byzantine world there is a good survey by E.A. Ivison, *Mortuary Practices in Byzantium, c.950-1453: An Archeological Contribution* (unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Birmingham University, 1993). I owe this reference to Philip Grierson. According to Ivison the distribution of coins is uneven, with worn and low-value coins, and sometimes ancient Roman and even Greek coins, appearing in both modest and richly built graves. The coins therefore have no value in terms of wealth, but are considered as probable apotropaic charms, some possibly chosen for their Christian iconography. (See Ivison chap. 13).

¹⁰ See the example of Piedmont, in A. Crosetto, “Sepolture e usi funerari medievali”, *Archeologia in Piemonte*, vol. III, *Il Medioevo*, eds. L. Mercado and E. Micheletto (Turin, 1998), pp. 209-32: grave-goods here disappear in the eighth century but the body is dressed in rich clothing (p. 218).

¹¹ One of the first analyses of such finds in an archaeological context in Italy is by C. Amante Simoni, “sepoltura e moneta: obolo viatico-obolo offerta”, in *Le sepolture in Sardegna dal IV al VII secolo* (IV Convegno sull’archeologia tardoromana e medievale, Cuglieri 27-28 giugno 1987) (Oristano 1990), pp. 231-42. She makes a plausible distinction between pierced coins, used for ornament, and unpierced ones, and considers only the latter to have been deposited as a ritual offering. For a different opinion, see D’Angela, “Contesti tombali” (n. 1), p. 321.

¹² N. Christie, *The Lombards* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass., 1995), pp. 128-9; Blake, “Sepolture” (n. 4), p. 176, and C. La Rocca, “Morte e società. Studi recenti sulle necropoli altomedievali”, *Quaderni medievali* 26 (1988), pp. 236-45.

¹³ For Cornus, see Amante Simoni, “Sepoltura e moneta”, p. 240. For the Sicilian graves, see Uggeri Patitucci, “Indicazioni numismatiche” (n. 9), pp. 462-7. There are coins in graves at Trezzo sull’Adda but not at Calvisano. For the absence of coins in graves at Calvisano, see P. M. De Marchi, “Calvisano e la necropoli d’ambito longobardo in località Santi di Sopra. La pianura tra Oglio, Mella e Chiese nell’altomedioevo”, in *L’Italia centrosettentrionale in età longobarda*, Atti del Convegno, Ascoli Piceno, 6-7 ottobre 1995, ed. L. Paroli (Firenze 1997), pp. 377-411, at p. 405. Nocera Umbra, Castel Trosino and Trezzo are discussed below.

¹⁴ Christie, *The Lombards*, p. 136.

¹⁵ For selection based on iconography in Byzantine contexts, see Ivison (n. 9); in a Siculo-Punic context, see S. Frey-Kupper, “La nécropole de *Lilybeum* (Marsala) en Sicile: hasard ou exception?”, in *Trouvailles monétaires de tombes* (n.1), pp. 31-41; and in a Roman context, see C. Perassi, “Monete nelle tombe di età romana imperiale: casi di scelta intenzionale sulla base dei soggetti e delle scritte?”, in *ibid.* pp. 43-69. Some coins were thought to have magic powers. A Greek twelfth century text claims that a gold coin of Constantine the Great was effective against all evils. Maguire, “Magic and Money” (n.8), pp. 1044-5. The coin described was not one of Constantine the Great and St Helena, but more likely one of Basil II and Constantine VIII (L. Travaini, “La terza faccia della moneta. Note per lo studio dell’iconografia monetale medievale”, *Quaderni medievali*, 52, (2001), pp. 107-24, at 121-2; Id., “The Normans between Byzantium and the Islamic World”, *DOP* 55 (2001), pp. 179-96, at p. 195-6).

An important example of a tomb with coins is that of St Ambrose of Milan. This is one of the best documented early tombs of a saint¹⁶. When Ambrose discovered the bodies of SS Gervasius and Protasius in 386, he decided that he should be buried in the same grave under the altar saying that “it is proper for a priest to be buried where he used to make offering”. Ambrose died in 397 and was duly buried in a tomb parallel to that of Gervasius and Protasius (the altar in gold was added in the ninth century). During the survey of the tombs in 1864 coins of Flavius Victor (387-8), Theodosius (379-95), Arcadius (383-408) and Honorius (393-423) were found in the tomb of Ambrose which must have been deposited with him. All the tombs contained coins of the fifth and sixth centuries from the time of Bishop Laurence, who surveyed all the bodies about a century after the death of Ambrose¹⁷. The coins are all small denominations, as it is the case in most graves of saints.

If the coins were indeed deposited in two different periods, then they were the coins currently circulating during the two periods involved, that of the death of Ambrose and of the survey by Laurence in Theodoric's time (493-526). But why were the coins put there? Ambrose did not need coins to pay his passage to heaven or to serve as a talisman against evil; the coins in his grave may reflect the continuation of a classical tradition just as saints in the first five centuries of Christianity still Belonged to the classical civilisation¹⁸. But the saints had broken “most of the imaginative boundaries which ancient men had placed between heaven and earth, the divine and the human, the living and the dead, the town and its antithesis...For the cult of the saints...designated dead human beings as the recipients of unalloyed reverence...”¹⁹. By the end of ancient Christianity, the centre of cities was dominated by “the church or cathedral containing within it the memorials or shrines or graves of the saint of the church, and surrounded by the graves of lesser people”, whilst the dead of all other religious cultures were kept outside the city walls²⁰. We should then distinguish saints' graves from those of ordinary people when considering the contents. Coins found in a saint's grave were probably offerings, but what kind of offerings? Coins had been offered to pagan gods, springs, waters and shrines, and coins were offered into the Lacus Curtius in Rome as a place revered as an opening to the underworld²¹. The function of the link between living and dead provided by the latter can be compared to the same function of Christian saints. The outside of a grave needs to be distinguished from the inside, as different aspects of the funerary rite were involved²². In considering the interior of a saint's grave I would like to examine the element of “memory”.

Could the opening of the tombs of SS Ambrose, Gervasius and Protasius under Theodoric, only a century after Ambrose's death, have been motivated by the desire to authenticate the bodies, and a

¹⁶ Although the presence of coins in this grave is well known, it is not recorded in the otherwise extremely comprehensive book by J.-C. Picard, *Le souvenir des évêques. Sépultures, listes épiscopales et cultes des évêques en Italie du Nord des origines au Xe siècle*, (Rome 1988, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Française de Rome, 268); for St Ambrose, p. 45. Saccocci, “Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi” (n. 5), p. 84 refers to this grave as ‘tomba dei SS. Gervasio e Protasio’.

¹⁷ S. Lusuadi Siena, “I corpi dei santi Gervasio e Protasio e la sepoltura di Ambrogio”, in *La città e la sua memoria. Milano e la tradizione di sant'Ambrogio* (Venezia, 1997), pp. 98-103, at p. 100 (the coins were found together with other objects, such as gold buttons and textiles), and p. 101, where drawings of eight coins are reproduced: among them a nummus of Ricimer (d. 472), another of Odovacar (476-93) monogram type, a quarter-siliqua of Theodoric (493-526), type as *MEC 1*, no. 119. All bear on the obverse a bust of the ruler, and on the reverse either a Victory dragging captive (Arcadius), a city gate (Flavius Victor), or monograms; the only Christian element in the iconography is a small *Chi-Rho* by the Victory on a coin of Arcadius.

¹⁸ P. Deloiz, “Per uno studio sociologico della santità”, in *Agioграфия altomedievale*, ed. by S. Boesch Gajano (Bologna, 1976), pp. 227-58; P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago and London, 1981).

¹⁹ Brown, *The Cult of the Saints*, p. 21-2, also quoted by J. Davies, *Death, Burial and Rebirth in the Religions of Antiquity* (London and New York, 1999), p. 195.

²⁰ Davies, *Death, Burial and Rebirth*, p. 194.

²¹ Stevens, “Charon's obol” (n.1), p. 228.

²² Coins offered outside the grave were considered by St Augustine to be alms if distributed to the poor on the spot: Stevens, “Charon's obol” (n. 1), p. 229. External offers of low-value coins to relics was a common practice. See N. Herrmann-Mascard, *Les reliques des saints. Formation coutumière d'un droit* (Paris, 1975), pp. 275-96 (“Donations et oblations aux reliques dans les sanctuaires”); but see also the review by J. Dubois, in *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes* 134 (1976), pp. 449-52.

memento of the survey been left leave for posterity? At the time a good number of sacred bones were being moved from one place to another in a formidable hunt for relics and this might have suggested the need for authentication²³. The miraculous discovery by Ambrose of the bodies of SS Gervasius and Protasius in 386 had had obvious political value and many more such “politically convenient” discoveries were taking place which needed authentication!

It is generally thought that coins were placed in saints’ graves as memory tokens²⁴. It is still the custom today, during the survey of saint’s tomb, to insert a contemporary coin in the roll of parchment testifying to the act²⁵. The question then arises as to the distinction between coins as memory tokens in the graves of saints and other people of high status, and coins deposited in the graves of ordinary folk: were the latter amulets for protection, offerings, or perhaps also memory tokens?

Some comparison between the graves of influential people and those of lesser mortals is afforded by the two major Lombardic cemeteries at Castel Trosino (=CT) and Nocera Umbra (=NU) ²⁶. These sites which date from the last quarter of the sixth to the seventh century were long regarded as examples *par-excellence* of “barbaric” burial practices, but are now known to have been more mixed in character. For some time, the only coins to attract any attention from scholars were the gold solidi and the tremisses re-used as jewellery and considered important for dating purposes²⁷. Lars Jorgensen, in his recent study of family burial practices in these sites, examined the grave goods and duly noted the “coin-dated graves” of CT 7 and 115, and NU 17, with their gold coin-pendants²⁸. He nevertheless neglected to mention that old Roman bronze coins were found in these three as well as in other poor graves, either by the hands or pelvis of the dead or pierced as

²³ Forms of authentication are documented since at least the fourth century. See M. Heinzelmann, *Translationsberichte und andere Quellen des Reliquienkultes* (Tournhout, 1979; *Typologie des Sources du Moyen Age Occidental*, 33), pp. 83-8, and H. Leclercq, “Reliques et reliquaires”, in *Dictionnaire d’Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, 14. II (Paris, 1940), col. 2294-2359, at 2338. See also P. Geary, *Furta Sacra. Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*, (Princeton, 1978).

²⁴ G. Gorini, “Le monete rinvenute nella tomba di S. Antonio di Padova”, *Il Santo, Rivista Antoniana di Storia Dottrina e Arte*, 21 (1981), pp. 99-102, where the deposition of coins and medals in saints’ graves as memory tokens is compared to the use of foundation medals. Medals of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were deposited, with coins, in the graves of St Luke and of St Matthias in Padua (cf. Saccocchi, “Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi” (n.5), p. 95). For St Luke, see now G. Gorini, “La documentazione numismatica”, in *San Luca evangelista testimone della fede che unisce. Atti del congresso internazionale*, Padova, 16-21 Ottobre 2000, vol. II. *I risultati scientifici sulla ricognizione delle reliquie attribuite a san Luca*, eds. V. Terribile Wiel Marin and F. G. B. Trolese (Padua, 2003), pp. 577-96: coins here span from the fourth to the fifteenth century, and mainly coincide with the dates of known surveys; the date 1463 is engraved on the obverse of one grossone of Venice for Francesco Foscari (1423-57), coinciding with the survey of that year; the date 1562 is engraved on the reverse of another medal, and the same year appears in the legend of a cast medal, and both coincide with the survey documented in that year. The element of memory is therefore strictly proven by these materials. Gorini (p. 581) suggests that many more coins must have been deposited in the urn but were probably removed during the survey of 1562. One false lead coin was found. The obverse copied a denarius of Tiberius, the reverse a didrachm of Tarentum showing Tarasa riding a dolphin. Gorini thought it a renaissance work. Billanovich, however, believes it to have been produced and inserted in the urn in the fourth century to prove the date of Luke’s death, observing that the association between Tiberius and St Luke is better justified in the fourth century, when Luke was still believed to be a contemporary of Christ, and not, as later believed, that he was a disciple of Paul. See M.P. Billanovich, “La moneta falsa rinvenuta nella ‘tomba di san Luca’ a Padova”, in *Monastica et Humanistica. Scritti in onore di Gregorio Penco O.S.B.*, ed. F.G.B. Trolese, vol. II (Cesena, 2003), pp. 699-715. The piece deserves more investigation.

²⁵ Professor Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, personal communication, Rome 3 March 1999. This practice can be compared to that of placing coins in a casket in the ‘Porta Santa’ in Rome at the closing of a Holy Year, to be found at the next opening, and therefore giving a sense of continuity: see P. Cannata, “Monete e medaglie nel cerimoniale degli Anni Santi”, in *L’arte degli Anni Santi. Roma 1300-1875*. Catalogo della Mostra, Roma, Palazzo Venezia, 20 dicembre 1984-5 aprile 1985 (Milan, 1984), pp. 182-5.

²⁶ R. Mengarelli, “La necropoli barbarica di Castel Trosino”, *Monumenti Antichi della R. Accademia dei Lincei*, 12 (1902), cols. 145-380. U. Pasqui and R. Paribeni, “La necropoli barbarica di Nocera Umbra”, *Monumenti Antichi della R. Accademia dei Lincei*, 25 (1919), coll. 137-362.

²⁷ A. Alfoeldi, “Le monete delle necropoli barbariche di Nocera Umbra e Castel Trosino e la loro importanza per la cronologia”, *Atti e Memorie dell’Istituto Italiano di Numismatica* 5 (1925), pp. 73-8; M. Brozzi, “Monete bizantine su collane longobarde”, *RIN* 73 (1971), pp. 127-3.

²⁸ L. Jorgensen, “Castel Trosino and Nocera Umbra. A Chronological and Social Analysis of Family Burial Practices in Lombard Italy (6th-8th Cent. A.D.)”, *Acta Archaeologica* 62 (1991), pp. 1-58.

pendants²⁹. At Nocera Umbra, Roman coins were found only eleven out of a total of 165 graves. Bronze or plated silver coins, Republican to post-Constantinian and unpierced, were found by the right hand (NU 4, 11, 39, 105, 107), by the left hand (NU 160), or above the pelvis (NU 68, 85, the latter a gold solidus). At Castel Trosino, Roman coins were found pierced and used in necklaces, though there was one exception. In CT 115, a rich woman found with two necklaces bearing 5 solidi and 4 tremisses also had on her pelvis a plated Roman coin. Similarly, the rich woman of NU 107, bearing a necklace with gold pendants, had two worn Roman coins by her right hand³⁰. The presence of these old Roman coins probably had little to do with the status of the two women. Their value lies either in their symbolic or their magic significance. There is also an interesting gender pattern, with unpierced coins present only in the graves of women and children and mainly at Nocera Umbra, which was the more “Lombard” in character of the two sites³¹. The coins might have been seen as affording women and children help or protection that men did not normally require. This is not to say, however, that coins are found exclusively in the graves of women and children. On the Lombard site at Trezzo sull’Adda, at least two male graves each had one unpierced coin. Grave 1 contained a solidus of Phocas (c. 607-8), and grave 5 one of Heraclius (c. 613-29)³². In the recently discovered cemetery at Vicenne (Campochiaro in Molise), coins were found in 24 out of 167 graves, and in excavations in the nearby cemetery at Morrione (still in progress) coins have thus far been found in 24 out of 184 graves, sometimes in the mouth or below the skull, or pierced as ornaments. Ten unpierced gold tremisses were found at Vicenne, nine in male graves, associated with weapons and sometimes with a horse, and one in a female grave. Sixteen tremisses were found at Morrione, six in female graves, including one in a young girl’s, nine in male graves, including one with a horse, and one in a double grave with one male and one female. The tremisses were either Lombardic or Byzantine. One male grave at Morrione had one gold semisses of Justinian II, second reign (705-11) of Syracuse. Most of the other coins in the graves were silver siliquae, with occasional Roman Republican and later Imperial bronze coins. The finds at Trezzo and in Molise suggest that individual unpierced gold coins were more peculiar to male graves. The image of the ruler on these coins might have been the important factor because it symbolised “authority”, and thus the official position of the deceased³³. The few women’s graves with unpierced gold tremisses, however, make it dangerous to generalise. At Vicenne contemporary Lombardic issues were found in graves together with old Roman coins. At Nocera Umbra and Castel Trosino, old Roman coins were associated with gold Byzantine ones. On another site, at Voghenza (Ferrara), Roman coins were the only coins deposited with other

²⁹ Such coins have been noted by D’Angela, “L’obolo a Caronte” (n. 1), p. 86, and D’Angela, “Contesti tombali” (n. 1), pp. 324-5. The Roman coins are also neglected by C. Rupp “La necropoli longobarda di Nocera Umbra (loc. IL Portone): l’analisi archeologica”, in *Umbria longobarda. La necropoli di Nocera Umbra nel centenario della scoperta*. Nocera Umbra, Museo Civico 27.7.1996- 10.1.1997 (Rome, 1996), pp. 23-39.

³⁰ Also L. Paroli, ‘La necropoli di Castel Trosino: un riesame critico’, in *La necropoli altomedievale di Castel Trosino. Bizantini e Longobardi nelle Marche*, ed. L. Paroli, Cinisello Balsamo 1995, pp. 197-325, esp. p. 291, referring to M. Martin, *Das spätromisch-frümittelalterliche Gräberfeld von Kaiseraugst, Kt. Aargau* (Dereendingen-Solothurn 1991), p. 151, which I have not been able to consult. Unpierced Roman coins of the second and fourth centuries were found in mainly female early medieval graves near Ferrara: A.L. Morelli, ‘Le monete della necropoli altomedievale di Voghenza’, in *La necropoli altomedievale di Voghenza*, Supplemento al vol. 68 degli *Atti dell’Accademia delle Scienze di Ferrara* (1990-91), (Ferrara, 1992), pp. 45-53. Mainly female but also male graves with coins are listed by M. Brozzi, ‘Monete bizantine in tombe longobarde’, *QT 3* (1974), pp. 219-23.

³¹ Jorgensen, ‘Castel Trosino and Nocera Umbra’ (n. 28), pp. 47-8; Paroli, ‘La necropoli di Castel Trosino’ p. 199. E. Roffia (ed.), *La necropoli longobarda di Trezzo sull’Adda* (Florence, 1986), pp. 23-4, 96-7 (coin descriptions by G.G. Belloni).

³³ The male grave 33 at Vicenne had a horse and a seal-ring reproducing a copy of the reverse of a Lombard tremissis on the inside, for a personal and internal contact with the owner. See E.A. Arslan, “Monete ed anello con castone da Vicenne”, in *Samnium. Archeologia del Molise*, eds S. Capini and A. Di Niro, (Rome, 1991), pp. 344-5. For the graves see V. Ceglie and B. Genito, “La necropoli altomedievale di Vicenne a Campochiaro”, *ibid.*, pp. 329-34. For the coins, see E.A. Arslan, “Le monete delle necropoli di Campochiaro e la monetazione anonima beneventana nel VII secolo”, in *I Beni Culturali nel Molise*, Atti del convegno, Campobasso 18-20 novembre 1999, in the press. For such seal-rings see *I Signori degli Anelli. Un aggiornamento sugli anelli-sigillo longobardi in memoria di Otto von Hessen e Wilhelm Kurze*, ed. S. Lusuardi Siena (Milan, 2004).

early medieval grave-goods³⁴. The old Roman coins might have been chosen for their link with the past. On the other hand, since they continued to circulate as small change into the eighth century³⁵, they might have been selected for their low value. The “obol” of classical tradition was also a low-value coin, a symbol that death makes rich and poor equal³⁶. This perhaps explains why coins in Christian graves in the middle ages were more commonly low-value coins. By the time of the Carolingian reform, which introduced the silver penny into Italy in 781 to replace gold coins, old Roman bronze coins had evidently ceased to circulate.

Between 507 and 511, King Theodoric had tried unsuccessfully to discourage the deposition of precious goods in graves³⁷ but in the time of the Carolingians there was a change in funerary practices and the custom of depositing grave-goods was gradually abandoned. Coins, however, were still occasionally left with the dead. In the Byzantine world, where coins of gold, silver and copper were issued, the coins mostly buried with the dead were those of copper (Byzantine) or bronze (Roman)³⁸. The Carolingian evidence in Italy is particularly interesting. In general, single finds of Carolingian pennies are rare but they occur more often in graves than anywhere else³⁹. Two early pennies of Charlemagne (768-814) were found in a grave near Mosciano Sant’Angelo in Abruzzo⁴⁰, four papal silver *antiquiores* in a elite grave inside the church of Santo Stefano Rotondo in Rome⁴¹, one of Pope Adrian III (884-5) in a child’s grave at the Mola di Monte Gelato near Rome⁴², and a hoard in grave at Sarzana-Luni⁴³. By the time of Charlemagne, the bronze/copper coins were no longer used and more valuable silver coins were offered⁴⁴.

The Central and Later Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries)

Philippe Ariès, in his history of death in the Western world, comments that, after the fifth century, graves were only rarely marked by a sign. Funerary inscriptions became more common again after the twelfth century renaissance and the attendant “re-discovery of the individual”⁴⁵. When tombstones became more common, it was considered as a sign of humility to request not to have one. The Lord of Verona, Alberto I della Scala (d.1301), thus required that his tomb should not bear his

³⁴ For Voghenza, see Morelli, “Le monete della necropoli altomedievale di Voghenza”, pp. 45-53, and *ibid.*, “Monete da contesti funerari dell’Emilia Romagna”, in *Trouvailles monétaires de tombes* (n.1), pp. 169-80.

³⁵ The most up-to-date contributions are L. Saguì and A. Rovelli, “Residualità, non residualità, continuità di circolazione. Alcuni esempi dalla *Crypta Balbi*”, in *I materiali residui nello scavo archeologico*, eds. F. Guidobaldi, C. Pavolini, Ph. Pergola, P.M. Barbini (Rome, 1998), pp. 186-95, and A. Saccocci, “Monete romane in contesti archeologici medioevali in Italia”, *QT* 26 (1997), pp. 385-405.

³⁶ Stevens, “Charon’s obol” (n. 1), p. 217.

³⁷ There was arguably an economic reason behind this. See, D’Angela, “L’obolo a Caronte” (n.1), p. 83, and D’Angela, “Contesti tombali” (n. 1), p. 321.

³⁸ For example, a single follis was found in each of three early ninth century graves near Vittoria in South-eastern Sicily. See Uggeri Patitucci, “Indicazioni numismatiche” (n. 9), pp. 462-6. Low denominations also predominated in the graves studied by Ivison, *Mortuary Practices in Byzantium* (n. 9), p. 217.

³⁹ A. Rovelli, “La circolazione monetaria in Sabina e nel Lazio settentrionale nel medio evo. Materiali dagli scavi di alcuni siti incastellati”, in *Une région frontalière au Moyen Age. Les Vallées du Turano et du Salto entre Sabine et Abruzzes*, ed. E. Hubert, (Recherches d’Archéologie médiévale en Sabine. 1; Collection de l’Ecole Française de Rome, 263, Rome, 2000), pp. 407-22, at p.413.

⁴⁰ F. Savini, “Una tomba carolingia con un denaro di Carlomagno”, *Atti e Memorie dell’Istituto Italiano di Numismatica* 5 (1925), pp. 85-7.

⁴¹ The coins included two of Pope Gregory IV (840-4), one of Pope Sergius II (844-7) and one of Leo IV (847-55), all associated with Emperor Lothar I (840-55). See L. Travaini, “Monete medievali in area romana: nuovi e vecchi materiali”, *RIN*, 94 (1992), pp. 163-82, at p. 168.

⁴² T. W. Potter, “The Mola di Monte Gelato: a microcosm of the history of Roman and early medieval Rome?”, in *La storia economica di Roma nell’alto medioevo alla luce dei recenti scavi archeologici*, Atti del seminario, Roma 2-3 aprile 1992, eds L. Paroli and P. Delogu (Florence, 1993), pp. 137-52, at p. 146.

⁴³ Rovelli, “La circolazione monetaria” (n. 39), p. 413 note 23; A. Bertino, “Monete attestate in Luni dal IV al IX secolo”, *Rivista di Studi Liguri*, 49 (1983), pp. 265-300, at p. 283.

⁴⁴ It has also been suggested that the practice of placing a single coin in the mouth of the deceased in Christian graves “may have been spread by the Church, a hint that the custom had long since been severed from its classical myth”. See Stevens, “Charon’s obol” (n. 1), p. 226, citing H. Steuer, “Zur Gliederung frühgeschichtlicher Gräberfelder am Beispiel der Münzebeigrabe”, *Neue Ausgrabungen und Forschung in Niedersachsen* 6 (1970), pp. 148-149, 156, which I have not been able to consult.

⁴⁵ Ph. Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. H. Weaver (New York, 1981).

name, though it was nonetheless a grandiose monument bearing his arms and his image on horseback⁴⁶.

Before indications of identity on the exterior of graves became more common, only the inside of a grave bore the occasional token or sign of identity. The funeral ceremony, however rich in candles and offerings, left no physical trace in the long term⁴⁷. If a coin was the only long lasting object inside the grave and was intended as a memento, how did the memory work between the inside of the grave and the outside? A good case-in-point is the account of the death of Emperor Lothar III (1125-37) in the chronicle of Otto of Freising:

so that they could never be forgotten, the emperor's deeds were inscribed on sheets of lead and buried with him.

A survey of Lothar's grave in 1620 indeed recovered a lead plaque and a lead globe surmounted by cross, now in the Herzog Anton-Ulrich Museum, Brunswick. Karl Morrison comments⁴⁸:

Even taking the very long term into account, it is difficult to imagine circumstances under which those in charge of the Emperor's funeral would have anticipated the exhumation of body and plaque together. A second perplexity arises from the inscription itself, which is far from a comprehensive memoir. In eleven lines, the inscription records Lothar's name and titles, the length of his reign, the date of his death, and a brief eulogy. Perhaps Otto did not know the content of the inscription any more than he knew that there was only one lead plaque. But was there some connection in his mind between the memorial function of the record in the silence of the tomb and that of his own words in the silences of the codex?

There is surely no reason to suppose that the men in charge of Lothar's burial would not have foreseen an exhumation. In the twelfth century, as before, other tombs had been opened and their bones, particularly those of saints, relocated, thus justifying the "record" function of the plaque. Nevertheless, the possibility of an "internal" memory is also attractive.

As already emphasised coins deposited in elite graves, notably those of saints, tend to be low-value coins contemporary with the date of the burial, or to that of later surveys⁴⁹. High-value coins are unusual but when they do occur in saints' graves it has been suggested that only high-value coins could be used as tokens of memory. An example is the tomb of St Bartholomew at Benevento. The body of the saint is said to have been brought from Lipari to Benevento in 838. The first survey of the tomb took place in 1338. The survey of 1698 found inside the grave two lead plaques, both bearing the inscription +SCS BARTHOLOMEVS APST, one from the ninth century deposition, the other, in gothic letters, from the survey of 1338, to which one coin was added: a silver gliato, the

⁴⁶ F. De Maffei, *Le arche Scaligere di Verona* (Verona, 1955), p. 13, pl. 1. On the mark of identification of Byzantine tombs, see P. Grierson, "The tombs and obits of the Byzantine emperors (337-1042)", *DOP* 16 (1962), pp.1-60, at p. 9, note 35: "It would probably be true to say that in antiquity the likelihood of a sarcophagus bearing a mark of identity is in inverse proportion to the importance of its occupant. Only a sovereign would take it for granted that his tomb would be generally recognized".

⁴⁷ Blake, 'Sepulture' (n. 4), p. 179.

⁴⁸ I quote from K.F. Morrison, *History as a Visual Art in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Princeton, 1990), p. 214. The original reads: ... honorifice sepelitur, [actusque eius, ut nulla possent aboleri oblivione, in plumbeis laminis descripti iuxta eum reconduntur]. According to the editor (but not noted by Morrison), the words in square brackets were added in the thirteenth century: cf. *Ottonis Episcopi Frisingensis Chronica sive Historia de Duabus Civitatibus*, ed. A. Hofmeister (Hannoverae et Lipsiae, 1912), p. 340. The passage about the lead plaque may have been added in the thirteenth century, but the plaque found in the tomb was presumably deposited at the time of the original burial.

⁴⁹ The recent survey of the tombs in the Church of San Nicolò al Lido in Venice, for example, shows that there were four chronological groupings of coins coinciding strictly with previous openings. See G. Gorini and A. Saccocci, 'Relazione degli esperti Prof. Gorini e Dott. Saccocci sulle monete trovate nelle tombe di S. Nicola Magno, S. Nicola Zio e S. Teodoro nella chiesa di S. Nicolò al Lido', in L.G. Paludet, *Ricognizione delle reliquie di S. Nicolò 1992* (Vicenza, 1994), pp. 28-9; Saccocci, 'Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi' (n. 5), p. 87. Most of the coins found in the tomb of St Geminiano of Modena coincide with the survey of 1184, while 18 out of 19 pennies of Lucca can be better related to the *translatio* of 1106. See F. Missere Fontana and L. Travaini, *Monete medievali e materiali nella tomba di San Geminiano a Modena* (Nonantola, in the press).

main silver coin in southern Italy at the time⁵⁰. This time the coin was not of low-value, but of good silver and contemporary with the survey. The placing of a silver coin in the grave of St Bartholomew can probably be compared to medals deliberately deposited in saints' graves during the renaissance⁵¹. Medals perhaps presented a step forward in the idea of "official memory".

The grave of the Lombard Queen Theodolinda (d. 628) in Monza is a somewhat different case. Theodolinda was venerated, almost as a saint, and a great ceremony took place in 1308 in the basilica when her bones were moved from a simple grave in the ground to a grand marble sarcophagus⁵². The chronicler's account of the ceremony does not explain why seventeen billion pennies of different mints were also deposited in the sarcophagus. Why was no gold florin put in the queen's tomb? Ermanno Arslan suggested that precious coins would have been more suitable to the 1308 ceremony and that the base coins probably belonged to an adjacent burial⁵³. This seems unlikely in view of the official character of such ceremonies and the seventeen pennies were probably deposited as memory tokens at the time.

Andrea Saccocci has also rejected the traditional interpretation of low-value coins as memory tokens, believing that the authorities would have preferred to select more precious coins⁵⁴. The low-value coins could have been offered by devout people outside the tomb or altar and placed in the urn as some kind of tithe. He also believes that a selection of contemporary as well as old offerings would have been gathered for the insertion during the survey⁵⁵. Such offerings, however, were regularly gathered, recorded and cashed or spent and it seems unlikely that coins were kept available for the opening of a tomb which was hardly a routine event⁵⁶. For the same reason concept of tithe, which implies a periodic taxation, does not seem pertinent to the survey of saints' graves. The lack of any written evidence on the deposition of coins in such graves on the occasion of surveys seems to prove that there was no regular prescribed rite⁵⁷. Low-value coins in current use, which are generally found in these graves, bore witness to the time, as everyday objects did, and were entitled to be tokens of memory. These coins may have been deposited by dignitaries

⁵⁰ D. Viva, *Effemeride di quanto è accaduto nella celeberrima ricognitione, e traslatione del Corpo del Glorioso Apostolo S. Bartolomeo* (Benevento, 1698). I am most grateful to Dr Beniamino Russo for this reference. The coin is described on p. 24 as bearing the legend K̄AROLUS DeI GR̄A H̄IeR. eT SICILIE RĒ for Charles I of Anjou (1266-85) but since the gigliato was introduced by Charles II (1285-1309) in 1303, this cannot be correct. It must have been either K̄AROL^o ScD^o DeI^o GR̄A... (for Charles II) or possibly RoBERTuS ^o DeI ^o GR̄A..., for Robert of Anjou (1309-43), whose coins would have been more common at the time of the survey. For South Italian gigliati of Charles II and Robert the Wise, see *MBC* 14, pp. 219-27.

⁵¹ Two fine silver grossi of Bologna and Rimini, were found among low-value coins, in the tomb of St Severo at Ravenna (E. Ercolani Cocchi, 'L'agontano in Emilia Romagna: produzione e circolazione', in *L'Agontano. Una moneta d'argento per l'Italia medievale. Convegno in ricordo di Angelo Finetti*, Trevi (Perugia) 11-12 ottobre 2001, ed. L. Travaini, (Perugia, 2003), pp. 55-78, at p. 64. For medals see above n. 24.

⁵² R. Mambretti, 'Il contributo dell'Obituariario e del 'Liber ordinarius' della chiesa monzese alla storia edilizia del Duomo', in *Monza anno 1300. La Basilica di S. Giovanni Battista e la sua facciata*, ed. R. Cassanelli (Monza, 1988), pp. 136-41. I am most grateful to Max David for this reference.

⁵³ Pennies of Cremona, Milan, Parma, Pavia, Novara, Piacenza. E.A. Arslan, 'Monete medievali', in *Monza. Il Duomo e i suoi tesori* (Milan, 1988), pp. 65-7: 'pare infatti poco credibile che venisse posto accanto alle ossa di Teodolinda un gruzzolo così modesto; più probabile quindi appare l'ipotesi di una derivazione da un'altra tomba collocata accanto o sopra quella di Teodolinda'.

⁵⁴ Saccocci, 'Ritrovamenti monetali in tombe di santi' (n. 5), p. 88: 'Se lo scopo era quello di offrire un ricordo del culto ... e di fornire ai posteri una testimonianza ... dovremmo aspettarci la presenza magari di poche monete, ma tutte di particolare pregio ...'.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁵⁶ See below, the report on the offerings at the altars of SS Peter and Paul in Rome, and above n. 22. For the accounts of the coins collected at the tomb of Beato Giovanni in Rimini, see P. Tonini, 'Della moneta forestiera in Rimini negli anni 1388-1393 (Documento inedito)', *Bollettino di Numismatica e Sfragistica per la Storia d'Italia* 2 (1869), pp. 187-218. The 'hands' *mani* of coins, recorded in the accounts, were not piles of coins, as Saccocci writes ('Ritrovamenti' (n. 5), p. 93, note 31), but units of account meaning four coins each. See L. Travaini, 'Un sistema di conto poco conosciuto: la 'mano da quattro'', *RN* 153 (1998), pp. 327-34.

⁵⁷ Recent research on the ritual aspects of such surveys shows that there was great variation in the ceremonies and that there was no written rule. See P.-A. Sigal, 'Le déroulement des translations de reliques principalement dans les régions entre Loire et Rhin aux XI^e et XII^e siècles', in *Les reliques. Objets, cultes, symboles. Actes du colloque international de l'Université du Littoral-Côte d'Opale (Boulogne-sur-Mer) 4-6 septembre 1997*, eds. E. Bozoky and A.-M. Helvétius (Tournhout, 1999), pp. 213-27, esp. p. 222.

Thanksgiving Season Food Conservation and Recycling during WWI

[blogspot.com](http://rochesterhistorytoday.blogspot.com/)

Rochester N.Y. - Today in History

A historical journal of life in Rochester, NY

Saturday, February 20, 2016

February 20

February 20, 1895: Frederick Douglass died in his home in Washington D.C. at the age of 78. He had been participating that day in a meeting of the Women's National Council and was scheduled to speak later that evening at the nearby Hillside African Church.

(from the New York Times, Feb 21, 1895)

Although it was a secret business session of the Council, Mr. Douglass was allowed to remain, and when the meeting had been called to order by Mrs. May Wright Sewall, the President of the Council, she appointed Miss Susan B. Anthony and the Rev. Anna H. Shaw a committee to escort him to the platform, where most of the delegates, not more than fifty in number, were sitting. Mrs. Sewall presented Mr. Douglass to the Council, and contenting himself with a bow in response to the applause that greeted the announcement, he took a seat beside Miss Anthony, his lifelong friend. Nothing to indicate that he was not in his usual good health was remarked at the time, and to-night, after his death was made known, nobody could recall anything in his appearance or actions out of the ordinary, except, according to the statement of a lady present, that he rubbed his left hand constantly with his right, as though it were benumbed.

The morning session lasted until after 12 o'clock, and just before that hour an informal discussion was started on the proposition that has been mooted for some time, to divide the National Council into an upper and a lower house. Mr. Douglass became much interested in this discussion, so much so, in fact, that when the council reconvened at 4 o'clock to give further consideration to the matter, he was again present, although it had been his intention to return to his home earlier in the day. He left the hall on the adjournment of the session, about 5 o'clock, and had been at his home but a short time when his death occurred.

When Miss Susan B. Anthony heard of Mr. Douglass's death, at the evening session of the council, she was very much affected. Miss Anthony has a wonderful control over her feelings, but to-night she could not conceal her emotion. Despite her seventy-five years, she immediately announced her intention of going to the Douglass homestead, near Anacostia, and had actually started, when some of her friends, fearful that the journey, with its quota of bad roads, and the excitement of a visit to the presence of death would have a bad effect on her, used persuasion to such an extent that she finally consented to defer the trip until to-morrow. She was very much averse to returning to the stage in Metzerott Hall, contending that it would appear unfeeling for her to do so, but as a number of the more distinguished members of the council were absent, she agreed to take her accustomed place to the right of the presiding officer.

Sources and Further Reading:

- Obituary- Death of Fred Douglass, New York Times. February 21, 1895, pp. 1&3

Share to Twitter

Thursday, February 26, 2015

February 26

February 26, 1904: "Rochester's Greatest Fire"

Starting before morning in a fuse of an elevator at the Rochester Dry Goods on East Main Street, a fire sweeps through nearly 2 acres of the city. Request for help in battling the blaze was made to Buffalo which sent 26 firemen and Syracuse which sent 30 firemen. The total damage was estimated at over \$3 million.

Sources and Further Reading:

- Peck, William Farley, "History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York", Vol. 1, pp 162-4 (1908)

Saturday, January 3, 2015

Rochester's Worst Winters Storms

Rochester ranks among the top U.S. cities with the most annual snowfall at 92.3 inches, just



ROCHESTER'S GREATEST FIRE, FEBRUARY 26, 1869

below our neighbors Syracuse (#1 at 115.6 inches) and Buffalo (93.6 inches). Rochester's official weather station was established in 1870, but the early settlers recorded several large storms in diaries for decades before that. Below are a list of the worst winter storms in Rochester History.

Snow Storms (Post-1870)

1. Feb. 28-March 2, 1900: 43.5 inches
2. Feb. 27-March 3, 1984: 32.7 inches
3. Jan. 29 - Feb. 2, 1966: 28.8 inches
4. Feb. 5-7, 1978: 25.8 inches
5. Dec. 8-11, 1981: 25.4 inches

Snow Storms (Pre-1870)

- Jan. 26-27, 1839: 2.5-3.0 feet (diary of Edwin Scrantom)
- Feb. 15, 1837: 2.5 feet (diary of Edwin Scrantom)
- Feb. 2-7, 1845: 30 inches
- Feb. 4-6, 1854: 30 inches

Top Snowfall in a Season: 1959-60 with 161.7 inches

Ice Storms

- March 3-4, 1991: 1.5 inches of Freezing Rain, over 135,000 Rochester Area homes without power.
- January 3-5, 1913: Over 1.1 inches of frozen rain.
- April 4-5, 2003: About 100,00 homes lost power.

Other

- Coldest Day: -22 F on February 9, 1934 (the prior day, February 8 also holds a record for that day at -16 F)

References and Further Reading:

- 1.
2. "Top 101 cities with the highest snowfall in year", city-data.com

Published: March 3, 1900
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- 37

and oranges glows in the sky that persist after sunset. The red skies continued for more than two years through 1884 and into the fall of 1885. Theories about the cause included sunspots and solar disturbances, comets, hurricanes and cyclones, and great lake storms. The true cause was the August 1883 eruption of Krakatoa in the Indian Ocean which spewed ash and sulfur dioxide into atmosphere causing global climate changes through 1888.



NO. 1.—THE ROSE COLORED ARCH AT SUNSET.
The rose sunset of November 22, 1885, photographed by Henry C. Maine, showing the rose arch and the brilliant light below it near the sun.



NO. 2.—THE SOLAR CORONA.
The Red Light corona or halo about the sun, photographed by Henry C. Maine, at noon, November 22, 1885. The vapors near the horizon are also lighted and of considerable actinic energy. The salmon color is in the faint outer haze surrounding the central brightness.

Sources:

1. History and work of the Warner

observatory, Rochester, N.Y. 1883-1886, Volume 1, pp 53-70 (1887) (source of images)

2. Wikipedia: 1883 eruption of Krakatoa
3. Rochester History, v9, issue 1 (1947)

NAVIGATE DAY IN HISTORY

>> NEXT EVENT: Dec 2 First Rochester Baby

<< PREVIOUS EVENT: Nov 23 Mechanic's Institute holds its first class

Friday, August 23, 2013

List of U.S. Presidents to Visit Rochester

List of U.S. Presidents to Visit Rochester, N.Y.

Visits of sitting presidents and president-elects:

February 18, 1861: President Abraham Lincoln (16) stops to make some brief remarks in Rochester during his inaugural train trip to Washington, D.C. [1], [2]

May 30, 1892: President Benjamin Harrison (23), New York Governor Roswell Flower, and Frederick Douglass give speeches at the dedication of the Soldiers' Monument commemorating civil war veterans in Washington Park, accompanied by a parade of 10,000 people. The monument includes bronze statues of infantry, cavalry, marine, and artillery soldiers with a central figure of Abraham Lincoln. [9]

October 17, 1936: Franklin D. Roosevelt (32) addresses Rochester area citizens. It was raining. [14]

May 2, 1940: Franklin D. Roosevelt (32) returns to Rochester. It rained again. [15]

October 8, 1948: Harry S. Truman (33) visits Rochester. [16]

October 15, 1964: Lyndon B. Johnson (36) attends a political rally in Rochester. [17]

June 18, 1971: Richard Nixon (37) discusses taxes, Vietnam, drugs, and race relations in Rochester. [18]

October 31, 1977: Gerald Ford (38) visits Rochester. [19]

October 29, 1980: Jimmy Carter (39) attends a political rally in Rochester. [20]

November 1, 1984: Ronald Regan (40) attends a political rally in Rochester. [21]

May 18, 1989: President George H. W. Bush (41) addresses local teachers at the Wilson Magnet High School and business leaders at Kodak on the issue of education. [10], [11], [12]

May 24, 2005: President George W. Bush (43) talks about social security in Greece, N.Y. [13]

March 14, 2006: President George W. Bush (43) again visits Rochester, meets local autistic basketball hero Jason McElwain and gives a speech at Canandaigua High School. [7], [8]

August 22, 2013: President Barack Obama (44) stops for lunch in Rochester on Park Avenue while on a bus tour traveling between Buffalo and Syracuse.

Visits of presidents prior or subsequent to holding office:

July 27 - 28, 1843: Former president John Quincy Adams, at the time serving as a congressman from Massachusetts, spends the evening in Rochester dining at the Eagle hotel and touring Mount Hope Cemetery. [22]

1920 Franklin D. Roosevelt visits Rochester in conjunction with the League of Nations Field Day.

October 19, 1932: Presidential candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt visits Rochester to support the candidacy of Lieutenant Governor Lehman.

November 1, 1960: A week before the election, Vice President Richard Nixon delivers a speech at the Rochester War Memorial Auditorium during his unsuccessful first campaign for the Presidency against John F. Kennedy. [3]

October 20, 2011: Former President Bill Clinton gives a speech at the University of Rochester Meliora Weekend. [4],[5]

October 19, 2012: Former President Bill Clinton returns to Rochester to attend a political rally at the Riverside Convention Center. [6]

References

- [1] Rochester History (July 1940) v. 2, n. 3, pg 4
- [2] Rochester History (July 1943) v. 5, n. 3, pg 17-18
- [3] The American Presidency Project: Richard Nixon, University of California, Santa Barbara
- [4] http://rochester.ynn.com/content/all_news/561216/bill-clinton-speaks-at-u-of-r-s-meliora-weekend/
- [5] <http://www.rochester.edu/news/show.php?id=3767>
- [6] <http://www.whec.com/news/stories/s2801765.shtml>
- [7] <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5280947>
- [8] http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/preps/basketball/2006-03-14-bush-autistic_x.htm
- [9] History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York (1908); Peck, William F.; page 108
- [10] Rochester History (Fall 1989) v. 51, n. 4, pg 13
- [11] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=17041>
- [12] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=17043>
- [13] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64547&st=Rochester&st1=>
- [14] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15196&st=Rochester&st1=>
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- [21] <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=39364&st=Rochester&st1=>
- [22] The Memoirs of John Quincy Adams: comprising portions of his diary. Volume 11, pg 397
- [23] <http://photo.libraryweb.org/carlweb/jsp/FullRecord?databaseID=716&record=64&controlNumber=11844>
- [24] <http://photo.libraryweb.org/carlweb/jsp/FullRecord?databaseID=716&record=85&controlNumber=4465>

Sunday, August 14, 2011

August 14

August 14, 1884: The body of Lt. Kislingbury, second in command of the Greely Arctic Expedition, is exhumed from Mount Hope Cemetery to investigate allegations of cannibalism. Kislingbury had been laid in state at Rochester City Hall four days earlier. Inspection of the body revealed that flesh had been stripped from the bone, confirming the rumors.

Sources and Further Reading



MEMBERS OF LADY FRANKLIN BAY EXPEDITION, 1884. (From a photograph by Olive.)
 W. L. Allen, E. L. Allen, B. Allen, C. Allen, F. Allen, G. Allen, H. Allen, I. Allen, J. Allen, K. Allen, L. Allen, M. Allen, N. Allen, O. Allen, P. Allen, Q. Allen, R. Allen, S. Allen, T. Allen, U. Allen, V. Allen, W. Allen, X. Allen, Y. Allen, Z. Allen.

- New York Times, August 15, 1884, "The Second in Command Lieut. Kislingbury's Mutilated Body Disinterred")
- History of Rochester and Monroe County, New York (1908); Peck, William F.; page 109
- Wikipedia: Lady and Franklin Bay Expedition
- Wikipedia: Adolphus Greely



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The Telegraph

Telegraph.co.uk

Sunday 28 February 2016

Runaway 'unicorn' tracked down by police in California

A fairy-tale creature was involved in a police chase before being safely returned to her owners

Juliette is a very pretty pony - and has a job as a horse model, where she dresses as a unicorn in photos.

Photographer Sandra Boos, of Madera Ranchos, California, got the pony for her 5-year-old daughter Tatum a year ago, and often incorporates the dolled-up white "unicorn" into her photo shoots.



5-year-old Tatum was very happy to be reunited with her 'unicorn' Photo: wishtv.com

On Friday, the tiny pony was dressed to the nines in her unicorn outfit, when she ran off.

Sandra Boos told BuzzFeed about the ordeal: "She went through 13 orchards and five miles.

Photo: Sandra Boos Photography

"It was crazy. The sun started going down and it started getting dark."



Boos then called in the highway patrol.

Photo: wishtv.com

She said: "She's all white and she's small, which made finding her difficult. The highway patrol called in a helicopter and they actually used infrared heat to find her."

Boos said she had to laugh as she overheard the highway patrolmen say, "Please be advised the unicorn is in custody."

Photo: wishtv.com

While the highway patrol was instrumental in catching the unicorn, Boos said it was the community she really wanted to thank.

"We had people stopping traffic," Boos told BuzzFeed. "And people came out from a horse rescue."

5-year-old Tatum was delighted to have her unicorn back.



Boos said: "The first call I made when they found her was to my husband to let our daughter know. She was in tears."

Juliette was punished for being naughty.

Photo: Sandra Boos

Her horn was taken away, and instead she was made to wear devil horns.

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Öland, Sweden. Spring, A.D. 480

A hastily built refuge—a grisly massacre—a turbulent period in European history

By ANDREW CURRY

Tuesday, February 16, 2016



Sandby Borg Excavations CIS

(Sebastian Jakobsson)

On the Swedish island of Öland, archaeologists excavate the scene of a massacre that took place more than 1,500 years ago at the site of Sandby Borg. Stone sheep walls dating to the 18th century crisscross the site of a fortress built to

protect those who lived inside its once-high ramparts. The sheep walls were built using stones from the ancient fort.

The scene might have been lifted from the pages of a Scandinavian crime novel: Under a steely sky, a half-dozen skeletons emerge from the cold, wet earth. A strip of yellow and blue tape, fluttering in the wind blowing in from the Baltic Sea, holds back curious onlookers. Portable fences, the kind that go up around construction sites, form a protective ring-within-a-ring around the scene. Yellow plastic stakes mark the spots where bodies, some with clear evidence of brutal blows to the head with an ax or other edged weapon, have already been found.

Slowly, trowelful by trowelful, a 12-person team of investigators is excavating the scene of a gruesome mass murder on Öland, an island several miles off the coast of Sweden. In the last five years, they've found body after body, sprawled out with many of their bones shattered, on the rough limestone slabs and gravel floor of a 1,500-square-foot house. But it's a cold case.

The floor is part of a house—the scene of the crime—surrounded by an oval ring of stones and earth, the remains of what was once a wall. Built around A.D. 400, it encircled an area the size of a football field. Now called Sandby Borg, the site is one of more than a dozen similar “borgs,” or forts, on Öland, all built during the Migration Period, a tumultuous era in Europe that began in the fourth century A.D. and hastened the collapse of the Roman Empire. The forts were like safe rooms in case of a siege or surprise attack and could be reached within a few minutes at a dead run from surrounding farms. Sandby Borg's 15-foot-

high ramparts once protected 53 houses and their stores of food. What remains of Sandby Borg's walls now surround a flat expanse of grass, and aren't even tall enough to break the strong winds. But 1,500 years ago, Sandby Borg would have been impossible to miss.

Despite its defensive advantages, its end was violent and swift. In a sudden onslaught not long after its construction, its residents were slaughtered, with just enough warning before the attack to hide their valuables. Their bodies were left where they lay, on the floors of their homes and even in smoldering fire pits. The houses were closed up and the place was abandoned. It wasn't looted after the murders, and neighbors on the densely populated island didn't interfere with the site, so archaeologists believe that the area was considered taboo for years after the attack. As the turf walls of its houses collapsed, Sandby Borg became a shallow grave, with bones concealed just inches below the surface. It's unique, says Helena Victor, an archaeologist at the Kalmar County Museum on the mainland just across from the island, because the attack and destruction were so sudden, and the site was never resettled. "This intact moment of an ordinary day is very important, because we know so little about daily life at this time," she says.

The Sandby Borg project began in 2010 in response to the threat of looting. Researchers at that time had little idea of what they would actually find. Archaeologists testing geophysical prospecting methods in the area noticed that treasure hunters had recently dug pits around the fort, perhaps looking for gold coins. Professional metal detectorists were mobilized to search for anything the looters had missed. They uncovered five different jewelry stashes from houses at the center of the fort. The caches include silver brooches and bells, gold rings, and amber and glass beads. There were even cowrie shell fragments, pierced to be strung on a necklace.



Sandby Borg Skeleton

(Daniel Lindskog)

Shattered skeletons of the massacre's victims were found inside their houses, still lying on the flagstones where they had been killed.

The deposits weren't randomly placed. Each one was buried just inside the doorway of a house, to the left of the door. Victor, who directs the Sandby Borg

excavation, immediately suspected that foul play was behind this arrangement. Her theory was that the women of the fort buried their valuables in predesignated spots. "It's possible there was an agreement amongst the women—if something happens to me, here's where you'll find it," Victor says. To identify five separate deposits, Victor goes on to explain, is a sign that "something terrible must have happened. These are things you don't forget or leave behind. Right away we realized they had all died." Her curiosity piqued, Victor returned to the

site in 2011. At that time, she dug three test pits, including one in House 40, a large dwelling in the middle of the fort in which the biggest jewelry stash had been found. On the last day of the weeklong dig, excavators made the grisly discovery of two human feet.

The following year, Victor and her team went back to Sandby Borg and uncovered the rest of the skeleton. It was a man in his late teens, lying on his back. His skull had been split clean open by an ax or sword. To have been hit with that much force in the low-ceilinged houses of the fort, the victim must have been kneeling, his death an execution. Next to him was another young man, lying facedown.

In Sweden, excavations are only funded in case of emergency; for example, if a site is about to be damaged by construction. Because there was no such threat at Sandby Borg, Victor had to scrape together funds for more small digs in the summers of 2013 and 2014. In 2014, they found the partially burned bones of an older man, facedown on top of a hearth. That the body was burned down to the bones in places suggests he was dead when he fell—otherwise he would have moved. “We make these assumptions sometimes,” Victor says. A child’s leg bone was also found not far from the older man, as though more evidence were needed that this had been no ordinary day. “It could have been a grandfather and his grandchild,” Victor says. “It’s a very clear sign someone killed everyone in the fort. Normally, raiders take the children with them [as captives].” The violent deaths deepened the mystery of Sandby Borg—and Victor’s determination to continue digging, at least until House 40 had been fully excavated.

When Sandby Borg was built, Öland must have been a risky and possibly terrifying place to live—it has a seemingly endless coastline for seaborne raiders to land on and no natural barriers to slow down attackers. Even today, the island can be a strange, forbidding place. Twenty times bigger than Manhattan, it is flat, windy, and barren. Yet none of this has stopped people from settling there. The earliest signs of human habitation date back millennia, and the island is still dotted with Bronze Age burial mounds and Viking runestones.

Two thousand years ago, Öland was connected to the mainland by the Baltic, and from there to the Mediterranean via established overland trade routes. Ölanders profited greatly from long-distance trade with the rest of Europe. Archaeological excavations and chance finds have turned up hundreds of Roman coins, bronze statues, glass beads, and vessels dating to the first four centuries A.D., when Öland had extensive contact with the Roman Empire.

As the empire began to decline, Scandinavian warriors from the islands of Bornholm, Gotland, and Öland found that a set of skills different from what they had sharpened before was now in demand. They had traveled thousands of miles south between a.d. 350 and 500 to work as mercenary bodyguards for the last of the Roman emperors, who paid well to guarantee their loyalty. Ölanders had long brought their wages back to the windswept Baltic island in the form of Roman *solidi*, gold coins commonly issued in the late empire. The *solidi* found on the island are distinctive, matching dies that have been uncovered in Rome. “A lot of them are very fresh, in mint condition,” Victor says, without the characteristic wear of coins that have been passed from hand to hand in trade. “There’s a direct link to Rome, and later to Milan and Arles.”

If gold is any measure—and there's every reason to think it was, considering the tiny holes Öland's mercenaries drilled in their solidi to check the purity of the gold, and the high concentration of coins found on the island—Sandby Borg was home to some of the island's most successful warriors. "When we mapped the solidi found on the island, 36 percent were within a mile or so of Sandby Borg," Victor says.

Then, around A.D. 450, the gold began to run out. The Western Roman Empire was at an end, and there were no emperors left who could pay for imported bodyguards. The latest dated solidi archaeologists have found on the island date to around this time. Archaeological evidence suggests that Öland's social harmony collapsed along with its economy. Suddenly, the island was full of unemployed soldiers, all of them fingering their swords and eyeing their neighbors' shining gold and imported glass beads. To protect themselves, people had already begun to build ringforts. In a phenomenon that seems to have been limited to Öland, small farms and hamlets were moved to be closer to the safety of walled borgs that were built to withstand serious assaults. The forts had high earthen walls and gates built using techniques brought home from Rome, with signs of crenellated ramparts and arched gates. The houses were arrayed in a circle along the inner wall and with a central block of houses in the middle. Archaeologists have identified at least 16 borgs on the island, all built at roughly the same time using nearly identical plans.



Sandby Borg Artifacts

(Daniel Lindskog)

Some of Sandby Borg's residents had time to bury their valuables—including rings, imported glass beads, gold coins, and gold, bronze, and silver brooches—before they were killed. Archaeologists also found several weapons at the site.

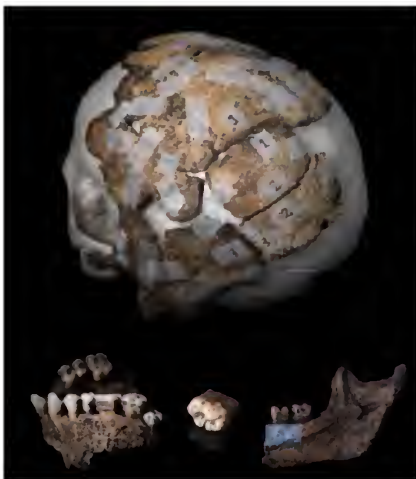
Much of what archaeologists know about Öland's ringforts comes from a 1960s dig at Eketorp, a ringfort about 20 miles from Sandby Borg that's now an open-air museum. As the island's society

crumbled in the Migration Period, many Ölanders abandoned their scattered houses and took up permanent residence behind the tall turf walls of the island's borgs. Eketorp had been occupied for centuries, from around the same time Sandby Borg was built, to well into the Middle Ages. "After work at Eketorp, the argument was that there wasn't much more to learn about forts on Öland," says Ulf Näsman, a Swedish archaeologist who led the Eketorp excavation decades ago and is now a professor at Linnaeus University in Kalmar. "Then came these finds."

Sandby Borg's story is, in fact, very different from Eketorp's. What archaeologists call the "cultural layer" inside the fort, the accumulated trash and debris of daily life, is thin. People lived there for a few months, at most, using it as a shelter rather than a home. "It was obviously built as a refuge and never really occupied," says Näsman, who is helping excavate

House 40's hearth. That's a sign that the community that sought protection behind Sandby Borg's once-mighty walls was an early loser in the unrest that tore the island apart. "When the power struggle started, we think people moved into the fort and brought everything with them," says Victor. "And then everything stopped. Nothing happened after this massacre."

Though speculating on how and why the massacre took place is captivating, the event itself is perhaps less important to archaeologists than its suddenness. Because life in the fort was extinguished so abruptly, the site has the potential to illuminate details of daily life in Scandinavia around a.d. 480. The fact that the fort wasn't looted or burned afterward makes it even more interesting. The killers seem to have left the bodies of their victims where they fell, and then departed, never to return. "It's compelling because people were killed inside the houses, and then the killers went out, locked the doors, and left," says Näsman.



Sandy Borg Skeletal Remains

(Daniel Lindskog)

Among the remains found at Sandby Borg is a skull in more than a dozen pieces, jawbones, and teeth belonging to the victims of the massacre. As archaeologists have explored House 40, they've uncovered some fascinating details. The team has found lamb bones that place the fort's final days in the spring. Grains of rye and the earliest mustard seeds yet found in Scandinavia hint at what else might have been on the table. "We've even found the skeleton of half a herring, perhaps part of a last meal," says Victor. "It's a kind of frozen moment you almost never have." Clara Alfsson, an osteologist at the Bohuslän County Museum in Uddevalla, Sweden, took soil samples from near the stomachs of several skeletons and will send them to a lab in Stockholm. "Hopefully

we can see what they consumed before they died," she says.

For now, though, bodies keep getting in the way. Human remains are complicated and time-consuming to excavate. Part of the reason it's taken nearly five seasons of digging (albeit only a week or so at a time) to fully explore just one house is that more bodies keep turning up. As clouds and sunshine alternate on a cold June day, Kalmar County Museum archaeologist Frederik Gunnarson squats in the middle of a shallow trench that cuts through the middle of House 40. Bones have been emerging all morning, including what looks like a child's vertebra, and the team is under pressure. "We've got eight people's bodies here, and six of them are new," he says. "And we've only got two days of digging left. It's time to make some operational decisions."

Just two percent of the fort's interior has been excavated. But the dramatic evidence of slaughter there suggests there may be hundreds more people within the fort's oval ring wall. "The thing is, this is not the only house," says Ludvig Papmehl-Dufay, another archaeologist at the Kalmar County Museum. "There must be dead people in the other ones as well. This was quite an attack."

The most intuitive explanation for such a massacre would be a major battle or siege. At Eketorp, archaeologists found evidence that one of the fort's gates was badly burned, and the area outside was littered with arrowheads, strong evidence for a failed attack on the fort. But at Sandby Borg, metal detectorists found nothing outside the fort's walls, likely ruling out a siege or violent assault. And the human remains the team has found thus far are strangely bare—most of the artifacts found were hidden or buried, apparently before the attack. "There is no dress, such as belt buckles [on the skeletons]," Näsman says. "Were they caught unawares at night? Maybe they were nude or in night dress and taken by surprise."

The assailants didn't even take the animals. The team has found skeletons of lambs, pigs, and even a horse inside the fort. "Horses are some of the most popular booty, but they left the horse and pigs and lambs behind," Victor points out. "It's not normal behavior." The animals seem to have been locked in and eventually starved to death. Victor argues that the curious abandonment is a sign that the Sandby Borg massacre was perpetrated by someone on the island. "If somebody had attacked from across the sea, residents of Sandby Borg's neighboring villages would have come and buried them, or at least nicked their sheep," she says. "There was a struggle on the island, and this is humiliation beyond death. Killing someone is one thing, but forbidding burial is a real demonstration of power."

As if the gruesome circumstances of the deaths weren't enough, two of the bodies were found with sheep or goat teeth in their mouths, a nasty twist on the coins typically deposited to smooth a warrior's way into the afterlife. "It wasn't enough to kill them and leave them in their houses," Victor says. "It's really, really ugly treatment." Whatever happened at Sandby Borg seems to have left a lasting scar on the island. Villagers in nearby Gårdby remember being told by their parents not to play near the fort's ruins, and, according to local legend, the town's churchyard is haunted by ghosts from Sandby Borg.

With help from the Kalmar County Museum, the 2015 excavation was extended a few more days, long enough to fully excavate House 40. The final body count: eight people, including a child between two and six years old. Added to the remains found in neighboring houses, there are 14 known victims of the attack on Sandby Borg. Victor hopes that what she's found so far, and future research at the fort, will illuminate not just how they died, but also how they lived. Ultimately, that may be a more lasting contribution than the details of the fort's final hours. After all, "there's nothing to compare it to," Victor says. "There's no 'normal' massacre."

Andrew Curry is a contributing editor at ARCHAEOLOGY.

March/April 2016

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Satanist Killed In Ritual To Be Made 'Into A Vampire'

wordpress.com

<https://jasperandsardine.wordpress.com/2016/03/07/satanist-killed-in-ritual-to-be-made-into-a-vampire/>

Jasper and Sardine Eyes to See, Ears to Hear

Satanist Killed In Ritual To Be Made 'Into A Vampire'

POLICE have arrested three people accused of killing a friend they were trying to turn into a vampire during a satanic ceremony at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.



PH Three suspects are being held in connection with the murder

Tragic restaurant worker Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle.

The horrific crime happened near the regional congress building in Chihuahua in the north of Mexico.

A teenage girl named as 18-year-old student Iveth Lopez is among those being held.

The other two suspects were named as Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25.

Police say Edwin, known as Piwa, was killed after being fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult called the Sons of Baphomet 1.

Instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers persuaded the others their victim should be sacrificed so he could return to life as a vampire.

Police were alerted last Tuesday after his body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder off as a drugs-related crime.

Officers found traces of the victim's blood inside the cyber cafe, which belongs to the older of the two men being held, after obtaining a search warrant when a protected witness told them how Edwin had been killed.

The murder reportedly took place inside the toilets late at night and the killers are said to have used bleach to try to clean up the scene of the crime.

A fourth person described as the leader of the sect is on the run from police.

Police announced the arrests yesterday as they revealed details of the horrific crime.

Police chief Pablo Rocha said: "This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire.

"All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we have."



PH

Edwin's sister Alicia, writing on social media sites after his funeral, said in a message to friends and relatives: "Don't be sad. I know it hurts that he's no longer with us. He's my brother and we are his family and it hurts us more than anyone."

"But we have something that comforts us. He always had words for us when we felt down, words of encouragement."

"I know as his sister that he wouldn't have wanted us to be sad about his departure."

Staff at the cafe where he worked, Cafe 340 in Chihuahua, placed a black ribbon on the facade as a mark of respect.

One said: "He was an honest person who always tried to keep out of trouble. His interest in vampires was a hobby and nothing more."

A local paper identified Iveth Lopez, the brunette arrested over Edwin's murder, as a Facebook user who used the fake name Eleonor Malina and described herself as a trainee police officer.

The teenager used to use as her cover photo a heart with the message 'In a relationship with Satan' and published a series of satanic photos including several relating to the Nazis.

Her current cover photo is a disturbing modified version of Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper painting with the twelve disciples covered in blood and a satanic-like figure in Jesus' place standing over his corpse laid out on the table.

Original Article:<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/650397/Group-kill-friend-cult-ceremony-vampire>

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This entry was posted on March 7, 2016 by dericiousknitty. It was filed under ANTI-CHRIST, Evil Good and Good Evil, Eyes to See, New World Order, Occult, Prophecy and was tagged with congress building chihuahua, edwin juarez palma, gustavo dorantes, initiation ceremony, iveth lopez, Mexico, Murder, Occult, occult ritual, omar sanchez, ritual killing, sacrificed to return as a vampire, satanic cult, sons of baphomet 1.

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Scientists at Large Hadron Collider hope to make contact with PARALLEL UNIVERSE in days

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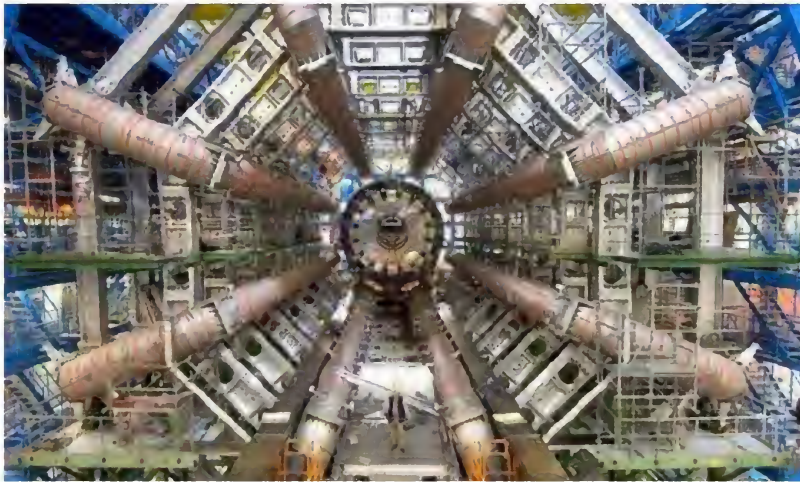
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Scientists at Large Hadron Collider hope to make contact with PARALLEL UNIVERSE in days

SCIENTISTS conducting a mindbending experiment at the Large Hadron Collider next week hope to connect with a **PARALLEL UNIVERSE** outside of our own.

By Paul Baldwin

PUBLISHED: 00:49, Thu, Oct 22, 2015 | UPDATED: 09:21, Thu, Oct 22, 2015



Getty

The staggeringly complex LHC 'atom smasher' at the CERN centre in Geneva, Switzerland, will be fired up to its highest energy levels ever in a bid to detect - or even create - miniature black holes.

If successful a completely new universe will be revealed – rewriting not only the physics books but the philosophy books too.

It is even possible that gravity from our own universe may 'leak' into this parallel universe, scientists at the LHC say.

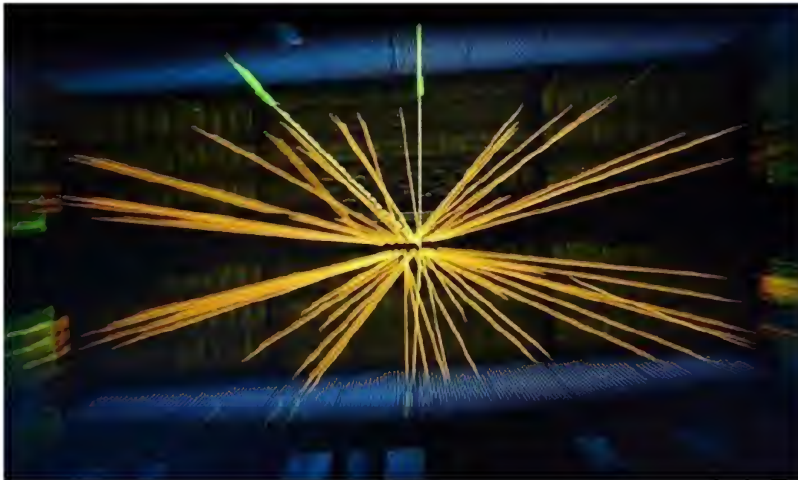
The experiment is sure to inflame alarmist critics of the LHC, many of whom initially warned the high energy particle collider would spell the end of our universe with the creation a black hole of its own.

But so far Geneva remains intact and comfortably outside the event horizon.

Indeed the LHC has been spectacularly successful. First scientists proved the existence of the elusive Higgs boson 'God particle' - a key building block of the universe - and it is seemingly well on the way to nailing 'dark matter' - a previously undetectable theoretical possibility that is now thought to make up the majority of matter in the universe.

But next week's experiment is considered to be a game changer.

Mir Faizal, one of the three-strong team of physicists behind the experiment, said: "Just as many parallel sheets of paper, which are two dimensional objects [breadth and length] can



Getty

exist in a third dimension [height], parallel universes can also exist in higher dimensions.

"We predict that gravity can leak into extra dimensions, and if it does, then miniature black holes can be produced at the LHC.

"Normally, when people think of the multiverse, they think of the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics, where every possibility is actualised.

"This cannot be tested and so it is philosophy and not science.

"This is not what we mean by parallel universes. What we mean is real universes in extra dimensions.

"As gravity can flow out of our universe into the extra dimensions, such a model can be tested by the detection of mini black holes at the LHC.

"We have calculated the energy at which we expect to detect these mini black holes in 'gravity's rainbow' [a new scientific theory].

"If we do detect mini black holes at this energy, then we will know that both gravity's rainbow and extra dimensions are correct."

When the LHC is fired up the energy is measured in Tera electron volts – a TeV is 1,000,000,000,000, or one trillion, electron Volts

So far, the LHC has searched for mini black holes at energy levels below 5.3 TeV.

But the latest study says this is too low.

Instead, the model predicts that black holes may form at energy levels of at least 9.5 TeV in six dimensions and 11.9 TeV in 10 dimensions.

552 Comments

(edited) Less than a minute ago

LadyKrampus

A potentially exciting article ruined by Paul Baldwin's willingness to include quotes from alarmist quacks and further include disproven conspiracy theories. The UFO pictures don't help at all.

(edited) 3 hours ago

flash harry

They have no idea what might happen. Once they open that portal it cannot be closed again,

but perhaps that would be a good thing.... we need a good clear out.

(edited)24 hours ago

Taha Pamuk

I definitely support the idea of creating mini black holes we humans doesn't deserve to live anyway. Finally violence on this earth will finish.

(edited)7 hours ago

unsignd

they've already tried this like 7 years ago and we're still alive but of course we have to go through the fear-mongering all over again.

(edited)1 day ago

the cuckoo's have landed

If I'm on message with this one, we want the black holes to lob the islamists into right ?

Sounds fair enough.

However presumably the Islamists are going to come out somewhere. Then it could really kick off, would you want 1.5 billion of these ass holes just turning up.

I'll be frank I dont think we've thought this through.

(edited)1 day ago

russellmowberry

If contact is made could the boffins who operate the collider send all the politicians and Eurocrats there ?

(edited)111 days ago

JosephGreen

The problem for me is,when they are working on something that has analytical maths as its basis for the experiment,there is a possibility that the math could be wrong.There are two camps of study ,the Einstein camp that believe that if you create a Black Hole you will send Earth to oblivion.Then there is the Hawkings camp that believe (Due to the math) that the Black Hole will evaporate.

Final point Einstein has only been proved right in his lifes work up to now ,whereas Hawkins has been wrong in parts of his work.I would therefore be more apprehensive of any CERN experiment based on Hawkings Mathematics.....Because at the end of the day ALL experiments at CERN are based on mathematical theories.Look forward to your comments

(edited)99 days ago

MeganMcClure

Hawking is roughly on par with Einstein. If you trust Einstein, you should trust Hawking, as they are both the pre-eminent sceintist of their era.

(edited)77 days ago

robert bristow-johnson

no.

(edited)116 days ago

RobertBlamberg

the problem is in containing the black hole itself how do they plan to control such a thing that at this moment we can not if they make it I will almost certainly start expanding and taking things into it making at worst case the earth to not exist

(edited)99 days ago

MeganMcClure

Hawking says the black hole will just evaporate.

(edited)117 days ago

JandreKroeze

Soon as Abaddon/Apolion comes through with his hordes, you wil lregret having done this deed.

(edited)120 days ago

DioDinn

"mini black holes" fu idiots

a new civilizations die evry time a use this "black holes"

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

Hellraiser, in the thunder and heat

Hellraiser, rock you back in your seat

Hellraiser, and I'll make it come true

Hellraiser, I'll put a spell on you

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

VHS viral parallel universe springs to mind. Freaky stuff.

(edited)122 days ago

Huw

No they won't

(edited)122 days ago

Hornet1

I'm bored...I do hope they discover something interesting.

(edited)123 days ago

Scooter Van Neuter

Yeah, this sounds like a good idea...

(edited)123 days ago

GOTREK

Yeah Hitler is on the other side waiting to come back with the 4th Reich army.

(edited)123 days ago

Gordon

"SCIENTISTS conducting a mindbending experiment at the Large Hadron Collider next week hope to connect with a PARALLEL UNIVERSE outside of our own."

Getting High as a Kite on the 4th of july, on crack, no doubt.

(edited)123 days ago

HermesMercury

No Gordon, while I'm one of the alarmists who considers this dangerous because the math is simply not concrete enough - if it is successful it has nothing to with being high (which frankly I don't know a single doctor in Physics that would be) and everything to do with proving something that would have been utterly laughed at when I was 25, but which appears increasingly to be a likely truth.

-Regards.

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

What is wrong with the maths, maths best explains the universe.

(edited)124 days ago

John Nicholson

Plenty of parallel universes to see if you wander around any European city and town these days.

(edited)124 days ago

The detector

Westminster too.

(edited)124 days ago

The Cuckoo has Landed

This Mr Faizal in charge of it all, is he a Muslim then.?

(edited)123 days ago

pobsdad

Why does that matter? He's a scientist working on a science experiment. Do you ask your plumber what religion he is? Or do you ask him if he's qualified?

(edited)120 days ago

The Cuckoo has Landed

I'm from Bradford, you have to go through the Bradford experience to understand the clear and present danger that I believe this cult represent.

(edited)122 days ago

Cleaver2396

He's probably Arabic... But so what? Even if he's an Arabic Muslim he's a scientist first. Or have you seen a lot of extremely religious people in the field of science lately? No, they're too busy pushing their ideology.

(edited)2 days ago

Fedup Brit

And how many scientific discoveries have Arabic Muslims made?

Answers on a postage stamp please ^^

(edited)9 hours ago

dharmabm

Are you serious, have you ever studied history? Arabic scholars were responsible for most of the advances in mathematics, astronomy and medicine during the medieval period. Try not to be such an ignorant racist next time you post

(edited)124 days ago

EanStretch

what a load of cr ap

(edited)123 days ago

JulianPaul

Care to elaborate?

(edited)124 days ago

RunoutRon

Please tell them I want my socks back

(edited)123 days ago

Johnno

And tell Elvis he can come home if he wants to.

(edited)124 days ago

Jef

they will never be happy until they destroy our world

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

How can they be happy if there is no world, will they be smiling in hell, I don't think the devil will allow smiling. The devil will be laughing though.

(edited)2 days ago

JamesHealy

The devil doesn't exist, neither does God or the easter bunny for that matter !!!

(edited)124 days ago

Amygdolus

Mir Faizal, referred to sheets of paper as two dimensional objects, but as a scientist he ought to know better.

However thin the sheets may be, they still have thickness (plus length and width) and are therefore three-dimensional objects.

(edited)124 days ago

Quelchy

Exactly. My son was taught that a piece of paper is a two-dimensional object but if it were possible to take a piece of 'two-dimensional' paper and fold it in half 50 times, it would be approximately 100,000,000km thick. Not bad for an object of only two dimensions!

(edited)123 days ago

JulianPaul

The paper analogy is just used for visualization purposes. I'm sure Mr Faizal is well aware that a piece of paper is indeed a three dimensional object

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

Don't waste your time with the idiots, they never learn.

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

No, 2D doesn't have a third no matter how small, it doesn't have a third.

(edited)124 days ago

SteveSchmor

CERN had been operating at 13 TeV for almost a year now. They want to ramp it up to more than 20 TeV. And WHY do people think doom scenarios? I guess because if they create a black hole and cannot contain it. Well... that wouldn't be good.

(edited)123 days ago

pobsdad

If they do create a black hole, it will be tiny, and will evaporate almost immediately. Not really dangerous, but the media just hear black hole and start screaming End of the World.

(edited)122 days ago

The 4th. Horseman

Black holes don't evaporate.

I hope they don't create one which has reached a critical mass that allows it to expand. Assuming there is a critical mass that has to be reached, of course. Who knows. I don't think they know either. that's why it's called an experiment....to see what happens.

(edited)103 days ago

BillNye

Actually, they do evaporate... you know... "Hawking Radiation"? Super massive black holes do evaporate... but it takes too much time for humans to care (google-plex or something of that order). These EXTRA small black holes, on the other hand, evaporate in no time at all !

Thanks Stephen Hawking !

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

It won't create a black hole.

(edited)124 days ago

DavidAspinall

Why do people always think doom scenarios

(edited)124 days ago

Jef

Nuclear weapons come to mind

(edited)124 days ago

TimeForAChange

BECAUSE these plonkers don't know what the outcome will be

(edited)124 days ago

MercilessOne

If you know the outcome it isn't really an experiment is it ?

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

People who don't understand create doom scenarios, when fire was created by man, did they say no we must not mess with fire, we will set the world on fire and the world will burn to nothing? No because people were not idiots back then like they are now.

(edited)124 days ago

proudscot

Clever though these people are to create such things, I fear they are not advanced enough to be tampering with something as potentially overwhelming as this.

(edited)124 days ago

Mr.Monoxide

Just like nuclear energy it is the power of "gods" in the hands of children.

(edited)124 days ago

EanStretch

There is no god

(edited)123 days ago

Gordon

No, but there are children, with their fingers on the buttons.

(edited)120 days ago

springblossom12

Hello,

how come you don't believe in God?

(edited)112 days ago

BryanWilliams

How do you know there is no God? I cannot prove that there is. But can you prove that there isn't?

(edited)38 days ago

Endoftimes37

Exactly.

(edited)121 days ago

Monty

You fear? Primitives emotion for primitive idiot.

(edited)125 days ago

jameshenry

I have proof positive that a parallel universe exists as my wife came from there.

(edited)124 days ago

Jef

very witty

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THE 'BOOP' SONG IS TRACED

Witness in Helen Kane's Suit Says
Negro Girl Originated Style.

Evidence that syllables similar to Helen Kane's "boop-doop-a-doop" were sung before she began to use them was offered before Supreme Court Justice McGoldrick yesterday in the trial of Miss Kane's \$250,000 suit against Max Fleischer, the Fleischer Studios and the Paramount Publix Corporation on the ground that they imitated her style in the "Betty Boop" animated cartoons.

Lou Walton, theatrical manager, testified that Baby Esther, a Negro girl under his management, had interpolated words like "boo-boo-boo" and "doo-doo-doo" in songs at a cabaret here in 1928, and that Miss Kane and her manager had heard her there. A sound film of Baby Esther was made, which Justice McGoldrick arranged to see to aid him in his decision.

Scuba diver Christopher Le Cun sucked in to nuclear plant water pipe files suit against Florida Power and Light

wptv.com

Jared Werksma

12:04 AM, Mar 4, 2016

1:34 PM, Mar 4, 2016



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A scuba diver and South Florida native who says he's lucky to be alive is filing suit against Florida Power and Light. Christopher Le Cun said he was sucked into an intake pipe at the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant.

This has happened at least once before, in 1989. Both scuba divers have almost identical tales of roughly five minutes of terror

that they were sure would cost them their lives.

On July 12, 2015, Le Cun says he was enjoying a day of boating and scuba diving with his family and friends off the coast of Hutchinson Island.

"We were going from rock pile to rock pile and we saw a yellow buoy," said Le Cun.

The buoy marks three massive submerged structures, so large their silhouettes can be seen from hundreds of feet above.

"Did you have any idea what they were?" NewsChannel 5's Jared Werksma asked. "No, no clue, it actually was amazing to see," said Robert Blake.

Best friends since high school, Blake and Christopher tied their boat to the buoy and dove in to check out what was beneath while their families stayed behind on the boat.

"Were there any warnings posted anywhere?" Werksma asked.

"Nowhere, there was no warnings whatsoever," said Le Cun.

Florida Power & Light disagrees. A spokesman said since the plant was built the buoy has always read "stay back 100 feet." But both Blake and Le Cun claim there was no indication of danger, written or otherwise, until it was too late.

"I swam right up to this big structure and it looks like a building underwater. I felt a little bit of current. All of a sudden it got a little quicker and I said, 'this ain't right, this ain't right,'" said Le Cun.

"He got sucked in like a wet noodle. He just, poof, gone," said Blake.

"What were you feeling at that point, I mean when you saw him get pulled in?" asked Werksma.

"Instant death. I saw my friend die," said Blake.

Blake surfaced in a panic, screaming to the people on the boat that Chris was gone and that "something sucked him in." Chris' wife Brittany Le Cun says she thought Blake was joking until she saw the look on his face.

"All I remember doing was grabbing my son, holding him, crying and praying out loud," Brittany said.

"Did you think he was gone?" Werksma asked. "Yes," Brittany replied.

But deep beneath the surface Chris was holding on.

"I kind of felt like I got sucked over a waterfall and just instantly complete darkness. I was getting tumbled around and around. I'm trying to hold onto my mask and my regulator. I finally get ahold of my light and I'm trying to look around. As far as you can see, it's just black," Le Cun explained.

FPL says the pipe Christopher was in is 16 feet across, about a quarter-mile long, sucks in around 500,000 gallons of water per minute and is used to cool the plant's nuclear reactors.

"It's about a 4-1/2 to 5 minute ride. You get to do a lot of thinking," said Le Cun.

"I knew something was drawing all this water. All I could think about was these horror movies you know, this big turbine coming and I'm coming for it. You know, it's going to chop me up and kill me," Le Cun said with tears in his eyes.

"I contemplated, you know, do I just pull the regulator out of my mouth and just die? I started thinking about my family, you know, how are they going to survive without me?" Le Cun said.

Finally, Christopher says he saw the first indication that his long, dark journey was about to end one way or another.

"All of a sudden it looks like a match, out in the distance, just the littlest bit of what you've ever seen. When it gets a little bigger, then a little bigger. Then all of a sudden just, poof, daylight. Fish everywhere, crystal-clear water the sun is shining and I'm like, 'is this heaven?'" Le Cun exclaimed as if he was reliving it as we spoke.

He was still on Earth and counting his blessings as he pulled himself out of one of the reservoirs at the nuclear plant and spotted an employee.

Le Cun recalls, "I'm yelling help, help and he says, 'how did you get in here?' And I said, 'I came through the pipe' and he says... 'what?'"

Le Cun says he was tattered and bruised but he could only think of one thing, "I said need a phone, I gotta call my wife."

Brittany was on the phone trying to explain to a 911 dispatcher what had just happened to her husband. So when calls started coming in from an unfamiliar number, naturally she ignored it. Until the third time, Chris called.

"Something's just telling me to pick up the phone so I did," said Brittany.

"She picks up and she just goes 'hello' and I said 'I'm alive,'" Le Cun remembers.

We asked Florida Power and Light about this incident and safety features at the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant. We received this statement:

Nothing is more important safety at our St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plants, which is a reason that we have a protective over the intake piping. The diver intentionally swam into one of the intake pipes after bypassing a piece of equipment to minimize the entry of objects.

FPL would not comment on the pending litigation which claims

negligence for inadequate safety precautions. Le Cun is hoping it will lead to safety improvements before this happens a third time.



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SDM court summons Lord Hanuman, terms it a 'clerical mistake'

By: PTI | Sasaram (bihar) | Published: February 18, 2016 4:12 pm

indianexpress.com

Earlier, the department had served notices to alleged encroachers after carrying out survey of the said area in the town.

By: PTI

Sasaram (bihar) Published: Feb 18, 2016, 16:12

A sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) issued summons to Lord Hanuman among others in connection with encroachment case, but the baffling direction has now been rectified by the court which termed it as a 'clerical mistake'.

The SDM court had on February 5 issued summons to Lord Hanuman and others while hearing an application filed by irrigation department which claimed that Lord Hanuman, Sai Baba and more than 100 others have encroached upon its land in Dehri-On-Sone town of Rohtas district.

The SDM court had posted the matter for further hearing on February 16.

But as the issue of summons to Lord Hanuman came to light, SDM Pankaj Patel on Wednesday dictated a fresh order and admitted that the earlier order had a 'clerical mistake'.

"Neither a notice can be sent to God nor God can be asked to appear in the court," Patel said and asked the manager or pujari of the temple to file his reply in this regard.

The pujari of Hanuman temple, located in Anikat locality of Dehri-On-Sone, appeared on February 16 and told the court that the said temple was existing since 1970s and the temple had not encroached on the land of irrigation department.

Earlier, the department had served notices to alleged encroachers after carrying out survey of the said area in the town.

It also filed an application before the SDM court in this regard which issued summons to the concerned parties.

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My search for the Nazi who saved my mother's life

Karen Kirsten, Narratively

Sunday, Feb 21, 2016 01:30 PM PST

salon.com

Among my family's many wartime secrets is the shocking story of the SS officer who rescued my mother as a toddler



Enlarge

"I'm here to find an SS Officer," I told the muscled man in uniform peering at me through the sentry window at the Berlin Archives. A plaque at the entrance read:

"During the 'Third Reich,' here was the barracks of Adolf Hitler's SS *Leibstandarte*," Hitler's personal-bodyguard unit.

"The man saved my mother," I added in German, smiling at the guard almost apologetically.

He handed me a pass and a white plastic bag with a German coat of arms printed on one side — a black eagle with red talons that looked capable of tearing out my eyes — and directed me to a building a few hundred yards to the rear of the sprawling campus.

Stepping inside a set of glass doors, I registered myself at a reception desk. A librarian, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair, told me to put my bag and coat in the locker room and bring back only what was 'absolutely necessary' in the white plastic bag. Five minutes later, I was back at the desk, plastic bag in hand. The librarian asked what I was looking for.

"I want to find an SS officer who saved my mother's life in Poland in 1944," I answered. "I know some things about him, but not his name."

Why did I feel the need to impress on people that the Nazi I was looking for might be a 'good' Nazi? Was I trying to protect them from their fathers or grandfathers, or was it me I was trying to protect?

"No. We can't help you," she said flatly with a scowl. "You can't find the names of these men without the permission of the families," she explained in a these-are-the-rules tone.

Patience was my goal here, although that virtue only personally comes out on special occasions. This was one of them, I decided, and smiled as sweetly as a child. "Perhaps you can help me find a list of men who served in Radom Prison in 1944, and we can start there?" I asked calmly, hopeful there was a publicly available archived list. The truth was, I didn't have much to go on. I knew he was of Ukrainian background, an officer, and had a reputation for torturing women, but I figured that last tidbit wasn't going to get me very far. If I could find

a list of officers, I could narrow things down by filtering for Ukrainian names, those ending with 'chko,' 'enko,' 'ovich,' or 'iuk.'

"It will take us at least six weeks to find that kind of information," she said bluntly. "You can't just show up. You should have emailed us."

I had emailed and was told that the archive's researchers could not help with this kind of search, and that if I wanted to visit, I could look through reference books on my own. So, I said, that's what I'm here to do. I showed her a printed copy of my email. She eyed me sharply, then left her desk and walked out of the room.

It was unnerving to wait near the ghosts of Hitler's bodyguards. Why was I even here? A few months before my father had said to me on the phone, "I think you want to find the Nazi more than your mother does — you're obsessed!"

* * *

The obsession began on a chilly New England evening in November 2011. I was pounding out the last of my work emails while snuggled on the sofa with a laptop balanced on my knee. On T.V., a young couple on "House Hunters" was deciding between a three-bedroom condo on a golf course and another with ocean views. With one eye on the TV, I googled my mother's maiden name, Dortheimer. Clicking on a link, I opened a film that had been shot days after the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp, of Hollywood directors John Ford and George Stevens interviewing a Mr. Dortheimer, my grandfather Mietek.

"We are more than sure that no one is alive from our families," he said in perfect English, staring at me through the camera, 34 years old in a striped prisoner's uniform that hung from his skeletal 84-pound frame.

"We don't know what will be with us. We have no place to go back."

No one in my family had ever seen the video, but my Jewish roots had preoccupied me for years. My mother is a born-again Christian and as a child in Australia, I'd clapped my hands and swayed to upbeat pop songs at a Baptist church, then spoke in tongues and raised my arms in praise to Jesus at a Pentecostal one. I knew that my agnostic grandparents, Mietek and Alicja, and my mother were born Jewish, but never suspected that our family had secrets dating back to The War.

Mum was in her thirties when a letter arrived from a man in Canada claiming to be her real father. She didn't tell me about the letter at the time. I was ten when we flew from Australia to Toronto to meet 'Uncle Dick,' a stout man with deep brown eyes, olive skin and strands of gray hair that were slicked against his bald head. I knew he was a long-lost relative, but was too young to guess the truth. A black-and-white photograph sat on the top of a bookshelf in his orange-curtained living room, of a young Uncle Dick in a Polish army uniform sporting a huge grin beneath his hard-topped cap. Sitting on his knee, I told him how handsome and young he looked. "Did you ever shoot anyone when you were in the army?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered.

His sternness and serious glare scared me. I didn't know what to make of him. During the six weeks we visited, he rarely ventured outside to play with me, preferring instead to bury himself in his newspapers and books.

While I sat on his knee, he pulled a heavy white-covered book from the shelf; it was filled with large photographs of Polish castles, palaces, and stupendously grand buildings. The words were in Polish, so he read the names of places in a rumbling baritone: Gdansk, Ujazdow, Warszawa, Piotrkowice.

"Before the war, Poland was important center of European culture," he said, his eyes wet with tears. "Now, most is gone."

* * *

In my teens I learned that Mietek and my grandmother Alicja weren't really my grandparents. My head reeled as their faces rolled around my brain like chess pieces mid-maneuver, undecided where to land. Alicja's younger sister Irena was really my grandmother. She'd been shot at age 25 by the Nazis, while hiding outside of Warsaw with her husband — the man I now knew as Uncle Dick — and their eleven-month old child Joasia, my mother.

Irena had given birth to Joasia in June 1942, at her parents' once palatial home on Orla Street, inside the Warsaw ghetto, cut off from the rest of the city by brick walls more than ten feet high. The occupying Germans crammed around 400,000 Jews — more than 30 percent of Warsaw's population — into 1.3 square miles, around eleven times the density of New York City. Starving children in threadbare clothes crouched on street corners crying, their stick-thin brothers and sisters lying frozen beside them, dead.

A month after Joasia was born, Nazi SS men with guns rushed into the fetid buildings, one block at a time, shoving women and children down stairwells and into the streets. Aiming their weapons at the sick and old, they shot them in their beds, in hallways. Women ran from courtyards screaming. Old men hobbled. Some carried bundles and suitcases holding a precious pair of shoes, a shawl, or a last piece of silver. A confused toddler stood alone, crying for his mother. The streets seethed with SS whipping the crowds toward the *Umschlagplatz*, a large square on Stawki Street.

A week of rain and wind did not delay the loading of the trains. "Where's the roundup today?" people asked anxiously.

Thousands waited on the *Umschlagplatz*, often overnight, surrounded by barbed wire and machine guns, in the stinking shit of those who had waited the day before. Two hundred policemen lined both sides of a path to the trains that would cart Mietek's father, Alicja's parents, brother, friends, aunts and uncles, to their deaths at Treblinka and Majdanek.

Dick crushed two sedatives he'd acquired from a doctor and forced Joasia to swallow them. The doctor warned that the pills might kill her. But when she was asleep and limp in his arms,

Dick tucked her gently into a backpack and headed for the checkpoint gate at Leszno Street, where Jewish workers deemed sufficiently strong left the ghetto each day for hard labor on the Aryan side of the city, their names on the 'deportation' lists having been deferred. Sliding into the column of haggard, sunken-eyed men, Dick handed over a pre-arranged bribe and marched out of the ghetto with Joasia on his back, asleep and buttoned up in his rucksack.

On the other side of Leszno Street, hawkish blackmailers — *Szmalcowniki* — scanned the street for darting, nervous eyes, for dark hair pushed under hats; frightened Jews who could be extorted and robbed under threat of being turned over to the Germans. Dick passed along another bribe and glanced over to where his friend Roman Talikowski stood on a curb. Exchanging glances, Roman began walking away. Dick fell in, not far behind, rounded a corner and followed him to an apartment, where he crouched behind a bookshelf in the dark.

After secondary school, I traveled for a year and lived with Dick in Toronto. In the evenings after he'd downed a Scotch or two, I listened to his stories as we sat around a laminate table in his tiny kitchen. I visited him again in my late twenties and then moved to New England for a job opportunity with my husband. Suddenly I was surrounded by Jews. Neighbors and work colleagues celebrated holidays I'd never heard of: Yom Kippur, Hanukah and Rosh Hashanah. Alicja and Mietek had assimilated with my mother into a middle-class Melbourne neighborhood — far from the Jewish suburbs of pickled herring and yarmulkes — where straw-haired, freckled Aussie children slathered black, bitter Vegemite onto thin white sandwich bread and people were welcoming, but not overly curious at the green numbers tattooed on Alicja's wrist. So when my neighbors in Boston invited me to eat matzo to remember how Jews overcame the impossible, the itch to find out what happened to my family became a fixation.

Returning to Australia for vacation, I somehow convinced Alicja to let me interview her. When I was growing up, she had barely mentioned the war. That all changed with "Schindler's List." We'd planned to watch the movie together, but instead she'd gone with a friend and phoned me a few days later.

"You must still go," she pleaded. "The scene in the shower room where they push in all the women, and they look up at the showerheads wondering what is going to happen to them, thinking they will be gassed?"

I had paused on the other end of the phone, not sure what to say.

"That was exactly what [it] was like for me."

In the movie, guards shouted orders in Polish and German at dozens of razor clipped, shoeless, naked women scuttling into a concrete-floored room. Biting their trembling fists, they huddled in groups sobbing, clinging to a mother, a daughter, legs tangled, breast jammed against breast, grabbing at the ribs of a stranger while staring up at the pipes. Suddenly the light shut off. Dark curdled screams turned to a wretched moaning.

I heard the Holocaust. For the first time, it took on shape and form. It had been forced onto someone I loved. I was unable to speak about it for days.

A week later, Alicja asked to meet me in a restaurant. We ordered red wine and a rich risotto. Dessert arrived and my grandmother was unleashed. She described Dr. Mengele on the assembly *Platz* at Auschwitz, his white-gloved hands, and how he flicked his whip at women who shivered in the cold next to her, pushing them from the line, off for killing, or experimental, mutilating surgeries on his operating table.

It was strange that she told me — not my mother — about this and the vermin-ridden barracks of Birkenau. She must have known that years later I would be like a dog digging for a buried bone, looking for evidence to round out memories that had been shaped by the unimaginable wickedness inflicted on her.

My tape recorder spun as we sat in her lounge room on her blue velvet sofa set, a porcupine Sputnik light pointing at us from the ceiling. Her shelves were filled with books, with titles such as *Survival in Auschwitz* that had terrified me as a child, when I'd been too busy building sandcastles on beaches and leaping bareback onto horses to process her horrors.

While perched on the edge of her sofa, I learned about the Nazi who saved my mother. He'd interrogated Alicja in Radom Prison in central Poland — after her arrest in January 1944 at a sawmill in a small town 25 miles away. She and her husband Mietek had been masquerading as Catholic Poles with false papers. To blend in, she'd attended mass, touching her forehead and tapping her chest in the sign of the cross. She combed back her wavy auburn hair and tucked tight braids into the nape of her neck. Instead of city-girl heels and hip-hugging dresses, she wore shapeless shirts and aproned skirts, offsetting her slender cheekbones and beguiling smile.

Seven months earlier, Dick paid a Catholic woman to bring Joasia to Alicja. "Everyone was afraid to keep her," Alicja explained. "So I took her." Walking to town with nineteen-month old Joasia in a stroller, Alicja covered the child's face with a blanket, her hair a dangerous jet black, her eyes as dark as bittersweet chocolate.

The day the Polish police arrived, Alicja ran from the house screaming onto the street, begging the police to shoot her instead of handing her over to the Nazis. In town squares across Poland, bloodied, dismembered bodies were hung up as a warning of how Germans extracted information. Joasia was left howling in her cot, clinging to a white teddy bear.

Radom Prison was surrounded by a brick wall topped with barbed wire more than thirteen feet high, an abyss of torture largely under the control of the *Sicherheitsdienst*, or *SiPo*, part of the security police and Gestapo that belonged to the intelligence agency of the SS and Third Reich. Most prisoners did not survive. Some who did described sadism as typical as that inflicted by SS *Obersturmführer* Ferdinand Koch. His initiation rite was to whip prisoners with a large bunch of metal keys, then a fire brand, then a broom, and if the prisoner was Jewish, to kick them with his metal tipped shoes. Koch's favorite was to push Jews to the ground and kick their heads, not stopping until the body was still and blue.

In Alicja's cell on the first floor, stone walls exuded dread and the air was thick with the smell of unwashed bodies. During the night when guards switched on the light, a dense black carpet of lice, fleas and cockroaches slithered on the ceiling, dropping onto women who were curled up shivering on corners of straw mattresses. A single window screened with thick steel mesh restricted light and air. Men screamed from the courtyard behind it, where Koch and others beat prisoners with bats, slashed them with whips and ordered them to crawl and jump barefoot on razorsharp shards of iron ore slag.

Alicja was handcuffed and driven a mile to Gestapo headquarters for interrogations — an imposing building where, in a labyrinth of airless stone-walled basement cells, women and men were chained to pipes and lined up for torture.

The Ukrainian officer was her interrogator, "a terrible fellow who was beating everyone," she said. "He was always saying 'pray to God that the war is finished and we all be safe', so maybe he was against [the war] a bit, but he was still beating people — ach, he beat *women!*"

But, she claimed, the Nazi never beat her. Once, during an interrogation to uncover the source of her false papers, he left the dank cell where she had been handcuffed to a chair. He returned cradling a bowl. The sweet smell rising from it would have tormented anyone thin and gaunt from the prison rations of watery soup. The officer lowered the bowl onto the table. Alicja stared at it in disbelief. It was thick with carrots, grains, potato and cabbage.

"I'm sorry, but there is no meat today because it's Friday," he said to her.

Back in her cell, she scribbled messages on tiny pieces of paper — *gryps*, as the prisoners called them — and rolled and stuffed them into pieces of bread. A Polish guard delivered her *gryps* to Mietek in his crowded cell. Later, Mietek sent word to the Nazi. He had valuable information, he said, but he and Alicja needed to see him together. The inmates learned of the meeting and rumors spiraled. "You are spying for the Germans!" they said.

One morning at Gestapo headquarters, an officer led Alicja and Mietek into a room. Unlike the sparse interrogation rooms — where whips were lined up on a table in order of size, ranging from small sticks to large rubber and leather whips as well as electric cables of varying thickness — this room was more office-like. A few empty chairs were arranged in front of a wooden desk and behind it a larger, more comfortable chair.

The Nazi told the guard to leave. Motioning to the chairs in front of the desk, he directed Alicja and Mietek to sit. Alicja pulled at her dress awkwardly. Hampered by her handcuffs, she slid her fingers up her leg to the top of her stocking. She unraveled the corset that was wrapped around her upper leg, yanked hard and pulled it off like whip. She passed it to Mietek.

"I want to give you something," Mietek said to the Nazi while fumbling at the cloth. Enormous diamonds emerged from slits in the fabric, earrings embellished with delicate filigree. Mietek held the sparkling stones in his palm, then lowered them onto the desk. Next to the earrings he placed diamond rings, carats large.

The jewels had belonged to Alicja's mother. Irena was wearing them the day the Gestapo came banging on the door to kill her. She'd hurriedly removed her *bust halter*, along with the diamonds sewn into its seams. Hours later, Joasia crawled on the floor among the dead, dragging the diamonds behind her. That's what Dick saw when he entered the house. He fled with Joasia, who was later sent to Alicja, along with the jewels. Now Alicja hoped that the only thing left of her family would help Joasia.

"When he saw those earrings he nearly fainted," Alicja said of the Nazi. "He said he would promise anything."

"What do you want?" the officer asked.

"We want you to promise to save our child."

The Nazi drove to the town where Alicja was arrested, found Joasia and took her to a convent. "Don't harm a hair on her head," he commanded — or so the legend goes, as some of the sisters of the Order told me recently. It's a mystery as to who cared for the Jewish toddler until then, and how the Nazi knew where to find her.

Later, during an interrogation the Nazi informed Alicja of where he'd taken Joasia.

"He kept his promise," she said. "He didn't have to, but he did."

* * *

In Berlin, I waited among the neatly stacked shelves, hoping to find a list of Radom officers hiding on a page somewhere. If I could match the Ukrainians on the list with officer's interrogation cases, I'd find Alicja's name and prisoner number. I'd brought her prison file with me that I'd had sent from Poland.

Eventually the librarian marched through a door up the back with a manila folder in her hand that included my printed email. She added a few more notes to the file and asked me again what I was looking for. I took the black book she handed me from a rack that contained reference numbers and descriptions of archived content, and sat at a table. She logged me onto a computer and then left me to it. Opening the book, I let the ends settle flat on the table to land on an arbitrary page, somewhere in the middle. My eyes bulged when I saw *Kommandeur den Sipo und des SD Radom*. But my stomach lurched. *What was his name?*

I noted a few reference numbers with my pencil. Hunched close to the computer screen, I keyed in the numbers and scoured dozens of documents with titles like 'Criminal proceedings against polish citizens.'

I told the librarian that I had been unable to find anything meaningful besides what I handed to her on a piece of paper, reference numbers for documents not viewable on the computer, with descriptions such as 'relatives of Ukrainian criminal police under command of the Sipo and SD, 1944.'

"Maybe my colleague can help you," she said. She wandered over to a man with a shock of

neat jet black hair and a thickly-bristled moustache. After she mumbled something to him, he glanced back and looked me over. They both returned to the reception desk. The man told me in a polite tone to come back the next day at two p.m. He'd have documents for me to look at. I nodded and thanked both of them.

At two p.m. the next day I stepped up to the reception desk at the archives. The anticipation of a discovery was killing me. I looked around for the librarian with the moustache. Dipping his head in my direction, he scuttled back and forth across the room as if in an awful rush to go somewhere. But he didn't seem to be fetching my books.

Finally, he directed me to sit at a table. But by three p.m. there was still no sign of any documents, so I began to rifle through books on shelves close by... *Aktion... Konzentrationslager... Juden... Großrosen...* I typed a message to my husband on my phone:

"I'm in Berlin archives looking for a murderer... weird looking at Nazi files describing arrests and killings. Not sure why I'm doing this?"

His message back was tonic: "...because it is important. Because in some way it will make a difference, even if you don't know what that is yet. All of this is taking you somewhere you need to go. Be patient. Stay passionate."

It's true the Nazi saved my mother, but I am the beneficiary. My life was handed to me on a platter. There was little chance this man was still alive, but I felt some irrational responsibility to thank his children. It had nothing to do with forgiveness — not after what the Reich did to my family — I wondered how a man who whipped and disfigured women would treat his own children. Knowing about his kind act might help them bear a past that was not their choosing.

The librarian placed two reference books on the table in front of me, like a waiter with a platter of roast chicken. He returned with a piece of paper and pencil and pulled up a chair. Removing the prison files from my plastic archive bag, I repeated the 'good Nazi' spiel and pointed to Alicja's prisoner number at the top of a page, hopeful he could match it to an officer. The librarian asked questions and scribbled notes in immaculately straight lines. Then his face turned hard — grim even. "This is very complicated. It will be very difficult," he said.

"But the man I am looking for is of Ukrainian descent," I told him. "There can't have been too many Ukrainian SS and Gestapo serving in Radom Prison?"

"Yes that's a good clue. Let me ask my colleague," he said.

In hushed tones, he talked with another man at the back of the room. Sliding into the chair next to me, he whispered, "but there were *many* Ukrainians. I will try, but I don't hold much hope. You see, it's impossible to search by prisoner number. The records are kept under the name of the officers, and their case numbers [of interrogations] are recorded against their names. What you are looking for is the other way around."

But, I thought, I have the prison files — let's do a reverse search — I can see when they entered the prison and when they left. I can see their false names on the first few pages and

their correct names on the last. There must be records of interrogations somewhere. Out the back maybe? What did they *do* with all that information?

Of course, I realized with a thud, in 1944 and 1945, in order to eliminate evidence of atrocities, the Gestapo and SS tossed hundreds of thousands of files into fires as the Allies and Russians approached. For a second, I wanted to give up. But I couldn't. Lurking in online forums, I had thrown names of Radom SS men at war buffs and collectors of Nazi memorabilia. I had pestered historians across the United States, Israel, Poland and Germany. I had traveled through Poland and now Berlin. Besides, just before I pressed STOP on the tape recorder at the end of my interview with Alicja, she had asked, "You think someone will want to know all of this? We should never forget what happened."

I'd promised her that I would tell her story, but I didn't think I could truly understand it unless I knew more about the Nazi. She may have left out details that were too harrowing to tell, but he could have taken the jewels and killed her. His training should have sent him to kill Joasia too. Whatever his motivation, he risked his life and saved a Jewish child.

"It will be difficult, if not impossible," the librarian said gently, with me too sour to notice that he was trying to help.

"We don't know what we would do if we were alive at that time in those circumstances," I said. "This man deserves to be remembered for one good deed, despite his bad ones."

"Ja," the librarian nodded, his lips turning upward ever so slightly. I thanked him for his help.

When I pushed open the glass doors to the outside, the cool autumn air blasted through my hair. I pulled my coat tighter, pressing my arms around my waist to seal in the warmth. The entrance gate of the former *Leibstandarte* loomed up ahead, like the eye of a needle. Nodding at the guard, I felt deflated at leaving empty-handed, but vowed to myself that I would not give up until I'd thanked the Nazi's family.

But as I walked back to the train station I thought about Alicja. "You remember everything," she'd said years ago from her blue sofa chair as she stared past me, somewhere beyond my shoulder. "You might forget the names, but you don't forget what happened."

Although I was in Berlin to find a Nazi, it was Alicja's courage that overwhelmed me. The Nazi had been in a position of absolute power, whereas Alicja stared death in the eye, and instead of using the jewels to save herself, she gifted life to another woman's child.

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Self-Driving Flying Car to Take Off in Two Years : DNews

discovery.com

Feb 23, 2016 08:10 AM ET // by Alyssa Danigelis



The hybrid electric flying car that's been a dream for so long is finally taking shape. Terrafugia announced that they expect to have a prototype for their computer-controlled electric aerial vehicle called the TF-X released within two years.

The company says a full-sized prototype of the TF-X will be ready by 2018, and a model retailing for around \$260,000 should be out before 2028, the Daily Mail reported.

If that seems like forever, consider the timeline for Terrafugia's first vehicle, a two-seater that runs on regular gasoline called the Transition. As Engadget's Richard Lawler pointed out last year, the second-generation Transition prototype logged more than 100 hours in the air, but key hurdles remain. This latest version still needs meet automotive crash safety standards, and meet the FAA's weight limit for Light-Sport Aircraft.

The TF-X design is even more complex. The idea is for the four-seat hybrid electric vehicle to have computer-controlled flight. After driving the TF-X out of the garage, twin propellers unfold and a megawatt of power lifts the vehicle up.

Rather than gasoline, a 300-horsepower engine will recharge the vehicle's batteries and give it a nonstop 500-mile flight range. The goal is to have cruising speeds around 200 miles per hour. It can also be recharged electrically on the ground.

All the automation has to be foolproof, too. The company wants operating a TF-X to be safer than driving a regular car. In the air, the vehicle should automatically avoid other aircraft, bad weather, and restricted airspace. Operators can either use manual or automatic control to fly. And an emergency landing sequence would go into effect if the operator becomes unresponsive.

Currently a one-tenth size model is being tested in the Wright Brothers wind tunnel at MIT, according to the Daily Mail. While we wait for the full-sized prototype, here's what the TF-X could look like:

The Massachusetts-based company has had a special place in my heart ever since I interviewed Terrafugia co-founder and CEO Carl Dietrich about the Transition's maiden flight for Discovery back in 2009 (video).

At that point, Dietrich preferred to call it a street legal airplane. Since then, the company has fully embraced the flying car moniker. The language might have changed, but the goal to have a safe, environmentally friendly flying car hasn't. With so much at stake, we can afford to be patient.

via the Daily Mail

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Severed horse head found in Manhattan park

NEW YORK (FOX5NY)

fox5ny.com



PHOTOS: Hillsborough Warehouse Fire

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Posted: Feb 29 2016 07:40AM EST

Updated: Feb 29 2016 04:18PM EST

- A woman in Highbridge Park in Upper Manhattan Sunday morning discovered a severed horse head and other animal parts inside a cardboard box, according to the NYPD.

The woman came upon a Corona beer box at about 11 a.m. and opened it only to find the head, other unidentified animal parts including bones, fresh fruit and bottles of soda. Some of the animal parts may have been cooked, said police.

The Department of Sanitation removed the box shortly after.

The investigation is continuing. The ASPCA and city Animal Control and Welfare were notified.

Top fox5ny.com Searches

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Haunted Places

In Oregon

Warning

Any places listed in the Haunted Places requires permission to visit or investigate. Many of the places are patrolled by the authorities, trespassers will be prosecuted.

Adair Village - Camp Adair POW hospital - Near the village -

Now abandoned and dilapidated, the POW hospital buildings of 1940s Camp Adair housed injured/ill German and Italian POWs during the Second World War. A number of POWs perished before the end of hostilities. Phenomena include EVP recordings of squeaking bedsprings (none are housed in the hospital), footsteps, and an intense sense of being menacingly observed by unseen eyes from within the buildings.

Albany - Albany cinemas -

In the late 70s a farm house was torn down to make room for more screens. The back two auditoriums are haunted. Incidents have been report such as sightings of a small ghost dog and small lights hovering along the floor.

Albany - Herford Steer Restaurant - The ghost is of the owner who was accidentally killed in his establishment by police. He is known for flipping hats off of employees, turning wall pictures upside down and sideways, turning non-burning table candles upside down, and sending everything on tables to the floor. -

June 2008 This restaurant has since been torn down, and as of yet, the site is still just a vacant piece of land.

Ashland - Lithia Park -

Story of a ghost of a girl who was raped and murdered there in the late 1800's. As witnesses passed a duck pond, they noticed a glowing blue mist floating directly over the center of the pond. They watched it for about thirty seconds, at which point it flickered and vanished like a flame being blown out.

Astoria - Flavel House -

Old Victorian era home now a museum, is said to be haunted by former inhabitants. Things like lights being turned off when left on by caretakers. Phones ringing when not

scratching you. the school is built right on top of the site. another haunting is of the parking lot, at night, a priest was murdered while getting into his car. you can still hear him scream, but only on certain nights.

Helix - Griswold School -

Haunted by Dr. Griswold, the founder of the school, and his wife. They can be seen looking in the left window in the gymnasium, although Dr. Griswold has been seen more often.

Hermiston - The Dollar Tree Store -

there a few different ghost the plays with the toys and talk. A worker took her digital camera and took some pictures and they claim it showed faces of like five different ghosts.

Hermiston - Wal-Mart DC -

During the construction of the warehouse it was said that illegal immigrants were a means of cheap labor to do clean up at night. One night there was an accident and when the winds picked up and knocked one of the steel piling down it fell on top of one of the workers. To avoid the police and being deported, the other workers quickly dug a hole and buried him in the concrete floor. Late at night walking down the modules freight will fall out at you. You can stop and look around but nobody will be there.

Idanha - The Rock Piles -

This place has been said to be inhabited by loggers and other ancient spirits. Many people have seen a woman hanging, a skinless dog, a headless logger, and even a little girl in white.

Jacksonville - Herman Helms House -

2 crying ghosts dwell here, and old lady and a young girl.

Jacksonville - McCully House -

Many guests have reported seeing a women in a white gown wandering the halls late at night.

Jacksonville - Wagon Trail Road -

Cupboards opening and slamming shut, Doors open and shut, Animals going insane, Evil presence, Beating on homes on all sides at the same time, Lights in homes, Footsteps on the hill(no one was there), Voices, Something touched a witness's wife's side,

Keizer - McNary high school -

in the 80's a student died in a crash. he said to now haunt the school auditorium. Students have report to have seen him and he has been seen during a play.

Klamath Falls - The Old Hospital -

Rumor is this was the first hospital in Oregon. People could rent rooms in the place before it was turned into a historical landmark. Apparitions of people where reported, especially by children.

Klamath Falls - Linkville Cemetery -

This cemetery is over 150 years old and is said to have a grave that glows a bright green on every full moon. Strange noises and other odd lights have also been reported.

Klamath Falls - Linkville Playhouse -

An extremely dedicated and involved actor, simply known by many as "Ralph", died in 1994. His spirit has been spotted on several occasions. A beginning actor was alone one night, and spotted a man sitting in a chair, smoking a pipe. He later told a seasoned actor and friend of his, who brought him to a picture of Ralph, asking him if that was the man he saw. He promptly said yes. Another actor reports during a dress rehearsal where they did absolutely no technical things whatsoever, the cast was on stage when suddenly Greensleeves began to play out of nowhere. They ran up to the soundbooth, which was empty, and tried to turn the CD player off. Before they could, the song changed right before their eyes! Others have witnessed in the costume attic by the light of the "Ghost Light" which is left on every night since the first sighting.

Klamath Falls - Mazama High School Football Field - There is a legend that there is a graveyard under the football field which is why it's so high off the ground. After lost football games you can hear murderous cries from under the bleachers.

November Correction/Update: This may be typical urban myth.

Klamath Falls - Old OIT on old fort road - The old college on old fort road is a very strange place. No one knows exactly why it closed. Apparently, there is a group of Satanists who work up there. It is believed that when people do sacrifices or something, bad energy is contained in the area. Anyway, several people have gone up the hill and have told me that there is a spot that has a bunch of rocks placed in a circle in the center is a pile of animal bones, but when the people went back up to find that place again, its always gone, and they will go up several times in search of it. Anyway old OIT had a dorm two school buildings and a gym that had a small swimming pool. There is one wall left, and a small area that has three walls and a cement floor. They are maybe 50 feet apart. Anyway, several people, credible witnesses say that they have seen apparitions, sometimes a fog in those two areas.

Also if you go at night, you can hear sounds like people chanting, or footsteps if you sit in car with the lights off right next to those two buildings. Also just up the road from old OIT there is a hill, or at least what appears to be one. It's a small vortex. One of the urban legends is that an old Indian was hung from a tree on that hill right next to the road. If you park under the tree, he will push you up the hill. But there are so many of those stories in various states that it is doubtful. -

April 2007 Update - It's fenced in. There are a series of large poles, possibly 30 feet high, with three giant tires hanging from them. No one knows for sure how they got the tires up there. Contrary to the page's entry, there are two buildings there. One is in okay condition, and there appears to be bloodstains on the side of it. On the other side of the place, there is a building in shambles, and this is what makes the place truly scary. Loud bangs are also reported.

La Grande - Candy Cane Park - A.K.A. Hatchet Park - Reports of the merry-go-round being haunted and cursed by a woman.- December 2003 correction: a woman was killed in the park years ago. She was found in the grass, still alive but someone had tried to chop the top of her head off- with a hatchet. That park doesn't have a merry-go-round anymore, but it's said that you can see her sitting on one of the benches or swings at it. -

February 2004 Update about Merry-go-round. Another submitter reports there used to be a merry-go-round until it was removed a short time ago. The woman did haunt the merry-go-round throwing people off and making it spin out of control. Since the removal of the merry-go-round, the woman is said to haunt the park benches.

La Grande - Hot Lake hotel - It was a resort built in 1907 considered the "mayo clinic of the west" because of the hot springs, it burned down in 1934 all except the brick portion, after that it was used as a hotel and then an insane asylum and finally a nursing home in the 1970's. Reports of a piano playing when there isn't a piano in the building, and clattering footsteps roaming the halls. many people have ventured in to this hotel which was once a hospital many people have said that a gardener once hung himself behind the hotel and say that to this day he haunts the grounds there have been many reports oh chairs falling of the walls and doors opening and closing them when no one is around -

December 2003 correction: The piano that is said to be heard is believed to be the original piano that was acquired when the hotel was built. It belonged to General Robert E. Lee's wife, and was said to be haunted and played by itself even before it was given to hot lake. The piano was removed by a former owner who later killed himself, but the music remained. Also, there is a gazebo just outside at the side of one of the lakes, and there have been reports of ghosts walking along the water and voices in the gazebo. Also, many strange happenings year around on the highway that passes hot lake. Many accidents have totaled cars with none hurt, and figures seen in the thick soupy fog that sometimes drapes the highway. The ghosts of the hotel are said to be the souls of many who died as a result of experiments performed when the hotel

was an insane asylum.

Lafayette - Lafayette Cemetery -

The witches' grave is haunted by the witch that was hung. Before she died she cursed the town and said that the town would burn to the ground 3 times. So far it has burned completely to the ground twice. If you go to her grave at night, usually you can see her standing around, or walking through the cemetery. Many people have reported being chased by the witch, and some still have scars on their backs from being scratched. The marks look like razor blades have been sliced down their backs. This is all true and factual, Just ask anyone that lives or has lived in that town.

Lime - Cement Plant -

This is the old plant, numerous unearthly growls have been heard. Apparitions wonder the grounds following people. There is always something changed, things move after you walk by so when you go back it looks different. Hand drawn pictures of depression can be found scattered through out the plant.

Mary Hurst - Christie School Administration Building -

Many years ago, when Christie School was an orphanage for girls, several children died of various diseases. Now, the fourth floor where the children lived is said to be haunted by these children. People have claimed to hear children singing and making other noises. There is also a voice of a woman that has been heard. Recently, four people went to the fourth floor at midnight. There was a cold draft and the sounds of children talking.

McMinnville - Community Christian Church -

April 2008 - Has been removed. Private Property.

McMinnville - MACK Theater -

Cold spots in the women's bathroom by one of the entrance doors to the theater. Feeling of being watched. Feelings there aren't scary just a little uneasy.

Medford - Justice Building -

The Justice Building in Medford Oregon, located downtown...every person who has ever worked for any of the janitorial companies to do cleaning in that building has experienced some sort of incident on the 4th floor...the cleanings would take place after 1:00 a.m. and the workers always worked alone and were in the building alone. Lights would get turned off....the worker would hear someone calling his or her name. doors would mysteriously slam shut and chills would run up and down your spine!

Molalla - Dibble Cemetery -

Strange howling can be heard coming from no where.

Monmouth - West Oregon University - Todd Hall-

For Halloween they gave a haunted tour of it and explained what has occurred there. Apparently when the building was first built it was used as an all girls dorm. The headmistress then, was said to be very protective of her girls. She retired after many years of living and working in Todd Hall. They named the hall after her. On the tour, they said that she has been seen and strange things have occurred there. For example, they once caught a bright light on a surveillance camera. There was no one in the building and it was locked up. Sometimes campus security will get calls that a motion detector of system has been set off, but when they go to check the building out no one is there. There have been other strange occurrences as well. It is said that other places on campus have been reported as haunted as well, but Todd hall is the most well known.

Mount Angel - Providence Benedictine Nursing Center -

Passed residents walking up and down the halls, standing in their old rooms, or sitting on their old bed. There's a story that a nun walks the halls at night, but some have never seen her. Feeling taps on your shoulder and hearing "can you help me?" Only to turn around to find that no one is there.

Mount Hood National Forest - Little Crater Lake -

Lots of people camp at Little Crater Lake Campground. Some have reported hearing crying at night and white cat that disappears every time you go close to it. People hiking by the lake have seen 3 teenagers swimming, yet no living people could handle water that cold. They say that there is one girl and two boys that reach there hands out of the water as if asking you to save them.

Myrtle Point - The Hurst Home -

mysterious appearances of a ghost named Mikey experienced by many.

Newberg - Newburg Graphic -

this small newspaper is housed in a extremely haunted location. Over the years employees have experienced strange time lapses and sightings of many apparitions.

Newport - Yaquina Bay Lighthouse - The lighthouse is haunted by a ghost named Muriel Trevenard. She was visiting the lighthouse with some friends from the valley. They looked around. Then left. Muriel then realized she left her handkerchief in the kitchen. She told her friend Harold she'd be right back and come out through the kitchen. He let her go. Then he heard her scream he ran to the kitchen door, but it was locked. he went to the front of the house and ran to the kitchen. Muriel wasn't anywhere in sight. - March 2005 Update/Correction: When you visit the lighthouse, it is stated that the story of the haunting is a work of fiction. For more information please

visit Yaquina Bay Lighthouse, Newport, Oregon

October 2005 Update: There has been a bit of controversy over this submission Please see <http://www.pbs.org/legendarylighthouses/html/pnworgl.html> for a different view.

North Bend - North Bend High -

There used to be an old pool underneath the sophomore hall of North Bend high school. A young man died in the pool of an unexplained drowning. The hall has been rumored to not only have students wandering the halls. It is believed by some to be the home of a long lost soul that died there so many years ago. There have been flashes of light, doors opening and closing, strange gurgling sounds, and even items being tossed across the room. The staff at North Bend don't like to talk much about the rare, yet most strange occurrences. But they have been talked about by the students for many years.

Nyssa - Underpass near the sugar factory -

It is a fact that many townsfolk will not admit too. After dark, anytime after dark, when you pass through the underpass, under the rail road tracks, if you don't look directly left or right you can see "footless" figures lining the walkway on either side of the underpass. Many people refuse to walk through the underpass day or night because they feel weird doing so. It has also been reported that on winter nights an "entity" described as being 7 foot tall with no feet and red eyes knocks on windows to awaken the people asleep inside. Strangely enough some photographs have been captured of the figure and his footsteps left behind in the snow.

Ontario - Malheur Butte -

Malheur Butte is a dead volcano overlooking Ontario, Oregon (the extreme edge of eastern Oregon). According to legend, it once was a popular meeting place of witches. The Snake River is also in the vicinity and supposedly draws wicca ceremonies due to the fact that it flows south-to-north. Near the Butte (and in the outlying areas, as well) many people have spotted small, shadow-like creatures after dark. A witness claims she was chased to her car by something she couldn't see very well. Whatever it was made noises and was about the size of a dog. Even though she doesn't spook easily, she was terrified by the incident. A few years prior, another witness claimed to have seen a similar creature at a nearby park one night. Other sightings have occurred. In addition to these alleged 'imps' the entire area surrounding Malheur Butte emanates a creepy vibe that is unmistakable.

Oregon city - McLoughlin house -

the McLoughlin house is a historical house turned into a museum it is haunted by Dr. John McLoughlin and his wife.

Pendleton - Eastern Oregon Correctional Institute (EOCI) - Formerly a State Mental

Hospital - Guards have stated hearing people down below yelling: "help, help, help." -

March 2004 Update:Before being converted to a correctional institution, it was a state mental hospital. It was converted possibly sometime early in the 1990's. This might be the root of the "help, help, help" cries.

Pendleton - Pendleton Arts Center - Used to be a Library -

Haunted by old Librarian who ate a whole bar of Lye soap in the basement over a love affair. She has been seen often at night in the windows looking out, and when it was a library she used to knock books over with a violent push. The basement is now rarely used and only during the day by employees.

Pendleton - Pendleton Underground -

There is an underground area in the downtown red light district where many businesses operated during the early 1900s, which were linked to tunnels that ran under the entire city. Many of the tunnels have been filled in due to safety reasons, but some still remain, and the city does conduct tours of areas in the underground tunnels. In particular, there is one area that the tour ventures into, which is a room that was used as a living quarters for Chinese immigrants. There is said to be a ghost that is often felt and/or seen by visitors in the far left corner of this room.

Pendleton - Old Building in the center of town -

It is said that a violent murder in this small town in an old abandoned building. The murderer murdered a young girl from the town, very brutally. The killer chopped off her fingers, then he chopped her up and her body is hidden in the walls and all along the roof. She still haunts the place where she was killed and is mostly on the roof and inside the building waiting for someone to find her and her body.

Pendleton - Pendleton High Auditorium -

Ghost of former student resides there. Has been seen in the light loft and in seat J-26. Ryan has also been known to run across the stage. During shows, pieces of scenery have moved and maniacal laughing has been heard.

Pendleton - Pioneer Park -

It was once a old cemetery until they built the park. A few graves still rest there. When you go you get an eerie feeling that someone is watching you when you do not see anyone. Some cold breezes go through when it is not windy.

Pendleton - Red Lion -

In April 2006 one of the workers committed suicide. Ever since then, at least three employees have been having visits from him. People report seeing him walking the halls, or just being a mischief and messing with things, or people feeling like they are

being followed. One worker reports they were one of the last people he spoke to and hugged before he passed.. And since then, they think he has been "following" and playing paranks them. The worker and the man very good friends. and The worker that passed was everyone's fix-it guy. The last thing he fixed Was an ice maker. He now like to mess with the ice maker to let the workers no he is around. Others have reported being touched as well.

Portland - Cathedral Park -

In the summer of 1949, 15 year-old Thelma Taylor was murdered under the St. Johns Bridge, also known as Cathedral Park. In the present day, disembodied screams can be heard late at night during the summer, and the police have been dispatched numerous times to the area without finding any evidence of foul play.

Portland - Burger King downtown -

Haunted by an unknown entity.

Portland - Buttermilk Restaurant -

this ghost, "Lydia", has been seen by numerous people.

Portland - Columbian Cemetery - former Love Cemetery and Columbia Cemetery-

this ghost, "Lydia", has been seen by numerous people.

Portland - ComedySportz -

ComedySportz is haunted by an unknown female entity. When the building is nearly empty, employees and performers have heard a woman talking or laughing-sometimes quite loudly- in the back room where costumes and equipment is stored. The ladies room toilet has also had problems and flushed endlessly with no explanation. Employees have also seen lights in parts of the building, only to go back to turn them off and discover that no lights were on.

Portland - Fairmount Apartments -

Manvelant and benevolent hauntings. This is a building that is located on the corner of NW 26th and Vaughn Street in northwest Portland. This is the last building standing from the centennial celebration of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1905. It was once a grand hotel and it now an apartment complex. Some of the residents over the years, have reported seeing apparitions late at night, while others have felt somewhat of a threatening presence mostly on the lower floors especially in the halls. Upstairs, the presence is not as threatening.

Portland - Hollywood Theatre -

Built in the twenties at least 4 past managers have actually SEEN the spirit of a man in

a white suit in the upstairs lobby. Rattling pipes backstage is also a common occurrence.

Portland - Kennelworth park -

said to be a young girl was raped and killed there, often walking in the park at night you can hear trying to scream or see her walking around the area.

Portland - KWJJ Radio Station -

In 1990, the station was at a building called The Wilcox Mansion. It actually went there on career day back in 1986. It was a beautiful mansion that used to be a living area, but has since been turned into offices. Some of the stories are the grand piano being played when no one but the graveyard DJ is there. Also stories of the massive chandelier swinging for no reason, and this was a massive thing that you usually see in movies. DJ's have been spooked so much in the past, that they had been known to have locked themselves in the DJ booth while working the graveyard shift. KWJJ moved out of the building a few years back.

Portland - KUPL Station -

There has been sightings of a man's face in the window. Also CD's that have been set out mysteriously disappear after the DJ turns away.

Portland - LOTUS-nightclub downtown -

Reports of something VERY creepy in the basement - has scared employees so badly, they refuse to talk about it. a bartender, alone after closing had finished cleaning the bar-i.e. no glasses were left out, etc. and went downstairs-to the creepy basement?- and heard a CO2 canister activate. A very distinct sound and not made when not in use-that is to say there is no pressure release on CO2 cylinders. Upon coming back upstairs the bartender found an upside-down shot glass on the bar.

Portland - Lewis & Clark College -

Find your way to the center of the campus, around 1:00am and you will likely feel someone or something there with you. On many occasions you can hear screaming and Yelling as if a mob is chasing someone through the old campus. On rare occasions you will see multiple apparitions come running through the campus center, one being chased by a group of 10-15.

Portland - Marshall High School -

a former night janitor said she herd strange sounds and once something said her name. She always works alone.

Portland - Oaks Park -

This amusement park built in 1890 has been plagued with a ghostly apparition of a lone child in 70's style clothing for over 20 years.

Portland - Old OMSI building - This science museum was shut down in the early 90's and moved to a new location, but people visiting the surrounding parks and zoo hear odd noises and see strange lights coming from the abandoned empty building. - July 2005 Update: This building was remodeled and opened as the Portland Children's Museum in 2001. www.portlandcm2.org. The building used to be rather creepy, most especially in the downstairs areas near the gem room. Those areas are employees-only now.

Portland - Old Town Pizza Company - The place of an old pizza parlor, still in business. It is very eerie and not very welcoming. The lights are dark and the atmosphere is spooky. The basement is said to be haunted by someone. There have been reports of things moving and things being replaced. Many of the workers won't go downstairs because of eerie feeling. Said to be a spirit who lurks around downstairs. -

October 2007 Correction: Nina is associated with the Old Town Pizza. There is a brick in the back room with Nina inscribed and there is even a portrait of Nina in that same room. Tourist can actually sit in that back room to enjoy their pizza. The story is actually told on a city of Portland Tour called the Dark Side of Portland Walking Tour.

Portland - Scapponia Park - North of Portland -

There is said to be the ghost of a man and his dog. In the late 1800's there was a horse thief who lives in an old cabin in the area of Scapponia Park. One night an angry mob took the man and hung him and shot his dog. It is said that they are buried together under a large oak tree in the camp ground.

Portland - Shanghai Tunnels - The shanghai Tunnels were used for kidnapping able men to work on boats. Now are said to be haunted by the men.-

June 2005 Update/Additional Information – This is a rather infamous part of Portland as the name suggests. Men would be shanghaied, beaten up to awaken aboard a ship. Also, women would be kidnapped and sold into the sex business. This form of slavery is something that has been both remembered and forgotten (usually at the same time) by Portland natives alike. It is said that the spirit of "NINA" has been known to haunt the halls of the tunnels. The spirit has been seen as that of a woman in white, which matched the description of a girl named Nina who died in those tunnels. In fact, the apparition has been known to stay pretty close to where her name "NINA" has been carved into the brick in one of the passages there. It is an original carving that was put there back in the day.

Portland - Tryon Creek State Park -

When the conditions are right, generally right before a major storm, if you are out along the North Rim Trail you will hear the sound of horses in harness and smell fresh

plugged in. Drapes being pulled closed or open by themselves. Basic haunted house stuff.

Astoria - Liberty Theater -

Old movie theater said to be haunted by a woman who is mainly seen in the upstairs women's bathroom, wearing Victorian era clothing. Is usually visible when looking at yourself in the mirror. She likes to stand behind you and look into the mirror as well. But when you turn around, she's gone. Reports from former managers of popcorn being made when they open up, and the soda fountain running. The managers were always the first to arrive and the last to leave. Supposedly a man was murdered in the downstairs bathroom, and another was pushed off the balcony as well. The theater was closed in 1998 for renovation. It is now a performing arts theater.

Athena - Old Gem Theater -

Second story of theater is now used as a home and the first floor is the abandoned theater. Reports of hearing foot steps in the hallways, doorknobs turning when there is no one on the other side. A whitish figure wonders about the theater seats.

Baker City - Baker Hotel -

Reports of parties on the second floor, especially in one room. Ladies of the evening are showing their ghostly appearance coming down the long stairway.

Bend - Congress house -

Many people have seen ghosts that inhabit this house that is from the turn of the century. In fact, there have been a few families that have lived there that have either died or something tragic has happened to them due to living in the cursed house.

Bend - O'Kane building -

Many people have reported seeing ghostly smoke, weird lights, footsteps, and voices. On the ground floor, in a restaurant, people have reported a ghostly voice (maybe of a long-dead waitress) shouting names and orders. The basement of the building is also haunted by the ghost of an old man.

Bend - Old Mt View Hospital -

Is now an apartment building next to Drake Park, a man died of old age in one of the apartments in the basement. People have heard creaks in the floor like he's walking around.

Bend - Old smoke stacks-

teens sneak in there at night to see if it is really haunted and it is said that there are ghost walking around and moving things around.

cut timber, even though the last time the area was logged was in the late 1800's. Down by the creek you can hear in the early morning, the sound of men getting ready for a day of work in the woods.

Portland - University of Portland - Franz Hall -

A janitor was said to have been cleaning the second floor when all of the mechanical doors (which can only be opened and closed by pushing the master button that is locked in a box in the wall that the janitors have the keys to).

Portland - University of Portland - Theater -

there is a ghost of a young girl who haunts the theatre. She is said to be seen in the basement storage, on the stage, and in the draft room late at night while students worked. She often tries to touch students and changes the station or volume on the radio when students are drafting should she dislike a station or like a song. She has often "hung out" with students while they worked late at night. She is dressed in a Victorian 1900's or so dress and hat with lace trim.

Portland - Villa St Rose School for girls -

It was said that before Villa St Rose was a school for girls, it was an orphanage run by Catholic nuns. In the gymnasium you can often hear little kids voices, running of little feet and laughing. Many students and some of the nuns have reported hearing this.

Portland - White Eagle Tavern -

A stairway is haunted in the kitchen area off the office area. The manager has gotten trapped there by various cleaning equipment.

Portland - Willamette - Mansion -

This massive mansion directly across the river from Waverly country club is still unfinished. The foundation is the remains of the city's water pump house. A number of years after its construction began the owner/builder hung himself in the elevator shaft. It has remained under slow construction and is haunted by this mans spirit. Doors locked behind us, brooms fell, lights turned on without us turning them.

Portland - Willamette River -

For the past two years a phantom rowboat has been sighted along this river. It has no one on the boat but when the coastguard goes to retrieve the boat it disappears right in front of there eyes.

Redmond - New Redmond Hotel -

people have claimed to here foot steps walk back in forth in the halls. There have been pictures taken and in the pictures there are clearly orbs in the lobby hall. Feelings of a

strange presence in the rooms in the middle of the night. Apparitions of a woman have been reported.

Roseburg - Downtown Umpqua Bank on Main Street -

You can hear people running up and down the stairs and doors opening and closing. You can hear people talking. Papers get thrown all over the floor. The lights go on after being turned off. Two people were seen running out of the bank chasing after some people walking down the street, even though the doors were shut and locked. A dog can be heard barking inside the bank. In the bathroom of the top floor a woman was seen wearing a 1920's style outfit and she's been seen and heard flushing the toilets. Loud noises can be heard like there's a room full of people talking and then it gets really silent. A man was seen walking inside the bank and then just disappeared. The bottom of the elevator always glows bright red and doesn't work right. Almost every night after all the lights have been turned off and the doors have been locked a light on the top floor goes on and a man is seen staring out the window.

Salem - 23rd and 24th St off State -

shadow/orb that manifests between 23rd and 24th Streets off State that will go between a body piercing shop and Sybillis Omelets.

Salem - Bush House -

The Bush House is now a Art gallery has a ghost from the turn of the century, she was a young woman who suffered from schizophrenia, her family kept her in the basement in shame. She died there. She now haunts the house. The owners have residents who live in the upstairs they say the ghost of the young woman will play with the thermostat.

Salem - Capital Building -

The capital was burned down twice by fire. One of the elevators shows its history when the carpeted floor mysteriously smolders. The capital has had to be evacuated once because of this unknown fire.

Salem - Croisan Creek Rd - Many years ago, little girl was hit and killed by a speeding car. Speeders going around that corner (near Kubler) report seeing a ball rolling into the road and a little girl chasing after it. It usually occurs on Friday nights. -

October 2007 Update: Drivers that are exceeding the speed limit have seen the boy standing on the side of the road wagging his finger at them, but when they look for the boy in the rearview mirror he is not there. So slow down on Croisen Creek Rd in South Salem.

Salem - D Street – Cemetery -

Strange anomalies have been reported to be captured on film.

Salem - Denny's Restaurant -

an evil entity is said to haunt this location.

Salem - Elsinore Theater -

They say a boy was murdered in the men's bathroom and you can still see the blood in mirror. Also the owners daughter fell off the top balcony and haunts the area she fell.

Salem - Fairview Training Center -

This place was home to Salem's Developmentally Disabled. Stories of brutality and murder about from this location. Many have said to see people walking across the lawns at night even though the place has been locked up since 2000. The cemetery there was built over by a building in 1930's and the bodies were not moved when the building was torn down no one could account for the missing 12 or so bodies. Former employees have said that they have seen the walls bleed and chairs move by themselves.

Salem - Footlocker Downtown -

The footlocker in Salem center, used to be a parking lot where a little girl was killed, and now employees say that they have heard and seen her ghost back in the shoe room.

Salem - Hayesville Area -

Reports of a ghostly semi-truck is said to drive around here and pass you at very high speeds at night then its lights fade right before your eyes! It will also chase away hitchhikers blowing its air horn. A wraith is also seen walking in the filbert trees.

Salem - Lausanne Hall University Dormitory -

Maintenance workers report seeing the ghost of a young woman in the attic, which has been out of use for years due to students not wanting to live in it.

Salem - Leslie Middle School -

Believed to be haunted by the founder of the school, Mr. Leslie.

Salem - Mission Mill -

Once a thriving woolen mill, it is now a museum and home to businesses such as the Salem Art Center. Also on the grounds you can find the original home of Jason Lee, the founder of Salem, and several other historical buildings that were transplanted to the grounds. Employees have had experiences of a young woman running across the bridge (from her spouse; she was rumored to have been murdered on the bridge), meetings with Wayne the groundskeeper (who, after death, is still caring and watching

over the grounds), and can sense extreme anger and pain from the turbine room, where a male employee lost his life while maintaining a turbine - while it was still on. Some people can also feel the vibrations of the old machinery running and weaving wool on the top floor of the museum; a room void of machinery and often rented for parties and receptions.

Salem - Home Town Buffet at 636 Lancaster Dr -

Doors slamming and running footsteps heard in the women's restroom. And an apparition of a woman in a pure white 50's style dress with pure white skin and pure white clothes as was her hair.

Salem - Oregon school for the deaf - Boy's dorm - many years ago 3 kids went down to the basement and were mysteriously killed. A black figure has been sighted by many students at a certain time on certain nights. A doll was found that appeared to be possessed. Ghosts have been seen in both the girl's and boy's dorms. -

March 2008 Update/Correction: A former student states, there are no reports of anyone murdered. There were No basements existed back then *AND* there were NO dorms back then. They were in SAME building as the school building back then.

Salem - Oregon State Hospital -

When walking in the old sections of the tunnels that run under the various buildings, you can sense that you are not alone. On the older section of the building (Administration Building) You at times will catch a site of figures in the windows, This building is also the site of which One flew Over The Cuckoos Nest was filmed. The building is condemned, however still has tormented spirits that occupy its halls and rooms.

Salem - Oregon state Penitentiary -

Due to fact this institution is a maximum-security prison which has been standing since the 1800's, there are many stories of hauntings. One is of an deceased inmate in D Block who walks the tiers and landings at night. His footsteps can be heard on the metal stairs and floors as he walks up one side of the stairs and down the other. If you try to catch him, he only speeds up. He has also been seen standing outside of cells causing graveyard officers to rush to the cell, only to find nobody there. The furniture factory and woodshop is also a hangout for the spirit of an inmate who were murdered there. There is an intercom in one of the towers where if you listen closely you can hear the chanting of an inmate who committed suicide. He repeats the same words over and over again in almost a whisper.. the inmate bled to death in his cell.. from that day on the chanting continued through the intercom box which is outside next to the building where it happened.

Salem - Pentacle Theatre -

A ghost called "Shelia" roams this theatre. She seems to be benevolent, and there is some discussion as to whether or not she was one of the founders of the theatre.

Salem - Zena Church - Has been removed. No Trespassing

Sheridan - NE Center St. -

There is a house on Center St. haunted by the spirit of an old woman (witch?) She is seen wearing rags. There are strange choking chemical smells. Loud metal banging crashing from the abandoned house next door in the middle night. Whimpering moaning dog sounds from the other abandoned house also next door. TV's will turn themselves on in the middle of the night full blast. Cupboards will bang in an empty kitchen. Footsteps are heard walking around the house/in the house at night. Strange break ins with no one being seen. The front door will unlock itself at night. Game systems (Nintendo, Playstation) will lose their memory. Shadows running around the house in the day. Yard gates unlock by themselves. Earthquake like rumbling in the day. Banging on the bedroom door at night. Sound of the front door opening/closing with no one around.

Sheridan - Sheridan city park -

a male in black cloths running between the trees and sitting on a bench on far side of park

Sherwood - Chapman Road house -

This 4 bedroom home built in late 1999 has been the scene of horrifying ghostly manifestations. This home is set next to the family's vineyard. The family has lived on this property for years. Up until 1998 they had lived in a older home on the same site but decided to demolish the old house and build a new one. Before the new home was built there were never any problems.

St. Helens - The High School Auditorium -

The high school auditorium is haunted with a women's ghost that died there. People have seen her in the lighting booth and sitting in the chairs.

St. Helens - Kinder Cemetery -

an old cemetery located on the north side of highway 30, in the northwestern most corner of the cemetery there is the spirit of an old man name George, when he is angry, you actually can feel the temperature drop dramatically. George has also been known to push and slap when extremely irritated.

St. Helens - The High School auditorium (Olmshied Auditorium) -

Reports of a girl died here and it's uncertain but some say that she actually died when the Forest Grove High School burned down. Reports of hearing a piano playing when

there isn't any pianos around, she messes with the lights, she messes with the sound, and one time she pulled out a stage light gel holder and dropped it right by someone's head.

St. Johns - Roosevelt high school -

There is a 16 year old boy who committed suicide and now is haunting the Roosevelt tower and night.

The Old Clatsop Hospital -

It is now a nursing home/assisted living center, but it was a hospital built in the early 1900's. The old elevator is still in use that goes down to the morgue. One night the employees there saw a beautiful blonde woman in an old fashioned nurses uniform with a laundry cart get on the elevator, the two employees ran down the stairs to find out who she was and why she was taking their laundry cart. When they reached the ground floor by the entrance to the old morgue, the elevator came down. They opened the old cage door only to find the laundry cart, but the woman was gone. Others say they have seen her walking in the halls. Nobody really knows who she is, but it is suspected that at one time she was a nurse there. She has been seen by most of the night employees

Tigard - Canterbury Cemetery - Ghostly lights and apparitions have been sighted from the highway below by passing motorists. This historic cemetery is located atop Canterbury hill in this suburban area. The lights are usually small greenish balls that move about in the trees. They don't seem to get close to people; they stay in the distance. Newer homes and apartments have been developing around the cemetery since the 1970's and residents in the area have also heard unearthly howls and screams from here. There is a large malevolent presence that comes and goes from there. And one of the condos built near the cemetery is the sight of ghostly phenomenon linked to the cemetery. -

March 2008 Update: This cemetery was cleaned up about six years ago, and actually looks great up there now. It is no longer abandoned, and is very viewable from the street since they took down a lot of trees. The stories from the place are easily explainable as there are two entrances in the back to two different apartment complexes. People can very easily get in there and turn on flashlights, or flares or such.

Tigard - Fanno Creek Trail -

This is on the Tigard side of the trail, just off North Dakota, heading toward Beaverton. An investigator was walking along the trail playing with his new Digital Voice Recorder and got an EVP right where the path starts. The EVP clearly states "SHUTUP!!!" which was funny. A week later he was walking along the path, and he got to the same part. He went into his pocket to get his recorder out again and he felt what he described as a fist punching him in the stomach. He doubled over in pain just to get

out of there. Whatever is there seems to be very selective; not everybody gets results. EVPs of growls like a trapped animal on that same part of the trail have been recorded at different times.

Tigard - Tigard High School - Deb Fennel Auditorium -

Stories of a ghost that inhabited this part of the school. It is said to be that of a former male student that went to the school who died during his senior year and now haunts this Auditorium. There are rumors of hearing things and seeing ghostly images. Most of the hauntings are in the "general mischief" category, such as lights being turned on, papers moved around, etc. When ever something strange would happen, the students blame it on the ghost.

Tigard - Washington Sq. Cinemas - There is a ghost known to whistle, produce light, start movies in the middle of the night, and push his image through the movie screen. The theater has an ominous presence and you can feel your hair rising from your skin.-

March 2008 Update: Shut down many years ago. It has sat empty for years now. During the summer, the parking lot is now used for the Tigard Farmers Market.

Troutdale - Edgefield -

This complex is now owned by the Mcminamin Brothers and they run this as a vineyard / brewery / restaurant / B&B. However it's original use was that of a Poor Farm and then later as a nursing home. It is said to have strong activity above the wine cellars (which was once the morgue) and in the cellars themselves. McMinamin's even posts some of the hauntings in their pubs/hotels on their website.

Troutdale - Springfield -

A Dark man that stalks the brick buildings on a basic basis. claims to be a man named Paul and states that he died at the hands of a monastery gathering. some believe others don't yet for r 28 year old Ben Yakarii the experience is all but a tall tale. when Ben first stepped foot onto the old grave grounds he felt nothing but coldness. two weeks after his stay with a group of five friends he was awoken by a freezing chill and noted that all windows had been securely shut. two days latter Ben found one if his friends in his room talking in his sleep and asking for lights to be turned off. Ben latter that day said that he saw a dark man or the out line of a dark man standing over him. Ben awoke two days latter in a Portland hospital and was told that his friend John had been found dead hanging from a railing of a flight of stares.

Umatilla - Hermiston – Echo - Wal-Mart and all of Echo -

Reports of a ghost being seen and heard in what is now the Garden Center before the remodeling.

Union - Carnegie Library -

one of the storage rooms in basement has not been refinished, you can hear strange noises, and the feeling of another presence. Also, upstairs in the main library, there is always an eerie feeling right behind you. the giant portrait staring down at you with conviction at the front desk doesn't help either.

Vale - Skerjanec Ranch -

A man is constantly seen sitting on an old stump, walking around. An electric keyboard comes on and off. At night, You can see a green mist from behind the shop. You can hear big thumps in rooms, you'll go in there and nothing will be there.

Veneta - death hill -

It is said that the ghosts of some loggers that were killed there are still roaming that place.

Warrenton - Stevens State Park - Battery Russell -

The bike path is haunted by a man in his twenties holding a flashlight looking for enemy soldiers. The Battery itself is also haunted, strange sounds can be heard in the deep dark places that go into the hillside. And cold spots are everywhere. The bunkers on the far hill are also haunted. Supposedly by a menacing figure in fatigues holding a large knife. Very creepy place to be even in daylight.

Wilsonville - Damish Hospital - Damish is an old insane asylum that has reports of seeing a man walking around with no flashlight in the middle of the night. There were also reports of people being raped while staying in the hospital. -

March 2008 Update was torn down a little over 3 years ago.

Wolf Creek - Wolf Creek Inn -

Owner, workers and guests at this lovely Victorian inn built in the late 1800's have all seen the apparition of a vampire creature with blood dripping from his mouth. And passing motorists on the old country freeways have seen him as well. One such story which made national news was when two hikers in the area witnessed the vampire while hiking around the wolf creek area, then later that night at the hotel they were bitten on the neck by the creature when they were in bed and it left strange unidentifiable bite marks on their neck.

Woodburn - Carl Road - If you drive down Carl Road and drive down until you see an orchard and get out of your car, you can feel a strange presence. If you go into the orchard and walk a little ways you'll hear leaves crunching behind you and when you look behind you, you'll see a white shadowy figure walking from one tree to another and then disappear. If you stay longer you can feel something pressing against you.

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Bend - Pilot Butte Cemetery -

Reports of blue orbs.

Beaverton - Shilo Inn -

The upstairs sports den and Canyon room are rumored to be haunted. Many employees and guests report here footsteps and a conversation between a man and women but upon further investigation no one is ever there. On occasion things will be moved about on their own, cups, chairs, ect.

Beaverton - Valley Theatre -

This old discount theatre has had strange poltergeist activity for years. In 1994 during renovation work crews were "persued" by a ominous creature that liked to play evil pranks and stalk the workers. Several workers quit due to the strange happenings around them and refused to come back to the location. And to this day strange occurances still happen to workers and visitors at this old theatre.

Beaverton - Westgate Cinema - A shadowy figure has been reported lurking in the upstairs projector room that was formerly a living quarters. When chased, the shadowy figure vanishes down a hallway that leads to double-doors that never opened. - June 2005 Update – Act III shut it down a couple of years ago, and it sits empty now. They are going to build a new cinema in the newer, "Hipper", part of town.

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March 2008 Was torn down over a year ago.

Bend - Yardley estates -

In the forest of the Yardley estates their is noises heard in the forests and some times if your playing games in the forest things will growl deeper then even a bear. Also you can hear footsteps coming near and more near you.

Burns - Ye Olde Castle Restaurant -

This restaurant was previously a house in the 1800's. Restaurant employee's have seen and talked about the lady in the blue dress for at least 20 years. Any time the Restaurant is painted or repaired she appears. Mostly she is seen out of the corner of you're eye. She stares at you but when you look directly at her she disappears, although you can still feel her presence. She is kind and motherly. It is thought she is either the friend of the owners. This friend died early of cancer and was very close to the owner and taught her to run the restaurant. In the same token it could also be someone who died when it was a house.

Canby - Old pioneer cemetery on Knightsbridge Road -

An old man dressed in a black suit with a brown leather hat holding a leather pouch

can be seen on some nights just standing in the graveyard. We lived right next door to the graveyard and on more than one occasion observed him standing in the same spot just staring straight ahead. One rainy dark night we watched him as he slowly walked away and down the street, we decided to follow him, got in our car and drove around the corner where he had just went a moment before; he was no where in sight.

Cannon Beach - The Argonauta Beach House -

Some people claim that this beach house is haunted by the ghost of Ghengis Hansel, a man who mysteriously disappeared there after the storm in 1952. People who have stayed in the house have felt a foreboding presence, especially around the many secret doors and compartments, all of which are locked tightly shut.

Cannon Beach - On the short approach road from Highway 101 to Cannon Beach - there is a phantom of a mummy known to locals as "Bandage Man." It jumps into the back of vehicles at night. The mummy has even been known to attack at times, leaving bits of his bandages behind. Bandage Man is said to eat dogs and has even murdered several people. Many believe him to be the ghost of a logger cut to pieces in a nearby sawmill. -

June 2005 Update – Some believe the haunting is limited to "The short approach". There are stories about possible Bandage Man sightings from Lincoln City all the way to Seaside (about a 90 minute to two hour stretch of road). It has also been said that Bandage Man was once a criminal who was shot multiple times by police. Once he was being transferred from the Hospital to the jail, he escaped, ran into the woods, and hasn't been seen since. This would explain the bandages, as he was still covered in them.

Cave Junction - Oregon Caves National Monument -

The Oregon Caves Chateau has a ghost named Elizabeth that roams through the rooms and halls. The story goes that she hung her self on her wedding night after catching her husband with another woman. She has been seen roaming the halls at night.

Central Point - Central Point Elementary -

Central Point Elementary was rebuilt in 1908 after a fire was the cause of death for many teachers and students. Stories tell of many different hauntings. A janitor was working the late shift, when he heard what sounded like the laughs of children, but upon turning to investigate, no one was there. He continues walking and hears the laughing again. The janitor's employers found his body torched as if it had been set on fire. Another story was also about a janitor, supposedly himself or someone had hung him from the pull rope of the old bell in the tower. Stories of every night at midnight the bell would ring, this was before the timer was installed, when the bell was rang at recess by the sixth graders. Students have heard footsteps behind them while alone in the bathroom.

Clackamas - Harmony House -

This restaurant has had many sightings mostly by workers but also some customers. A worker has been trapped in the supply closet and then just let out. Also two workers were closing and talking when they heard an older man clearing his throat and when they approached where the sound was coming from they saw smoke and smelled pipe tobacco. There has been a girl laughing and things moved from one place to another. This restaurant defiantly has personality and had an article written about it in The Oregonian Newspaper.

Corvallis - Cheldelin Middle School -

A janitor died from a heart attack in the upstairs gym. When the doors are shut and locked, he can be heard whistling, pushing his broom, the sound of his keys jingling as he walks. The lights mysteriously turn on by themselves.

Corvallis - Crescent Valley High school -

The costume room is haunted by a cold, un-welcoming presence. The costumes shift on their own and the ladder creeks as if someone were climbing it. The stage is also haunted. Strange drafts, uneasy feelings of an unknown presence, the curtains shift, and chairs move across the stage as if pushed.

Corvallis - OSU - Sackett Hall -

In one of the rooms is the sight of numerous disturbances including fire starting and things be thrown around the room. It is said that a girl was killed in that room. Her name was Brandy and she lived in room 121. She was known to be very loose particularly since it was the 1950's and one night she was killed by accident by a drunken frat boy. She still roams B-long, her physical body having been turned to dust ages ago all that remains is her angry spirit which is seen at times to be a swirling cloud, twisting and turning in constant eternal anguish for a unpunished crime...very few have seen her.

Cottage Grove - Mt. David -

Said to be a some kind of "spirit" that will chase you off of the hill at night time. Around the graveyards there are said to be many apperinces of the ghostly kind. Beware of the "thing" that will chase you off the mountain at night time.

Cottage Grove - Rogers paint and body repair -

Footsteps going up and down the stairs, feelings of a presents among you, tools being moved around the building, and slamming doors when no wind.

Culver - Old hwy. 97 between Culver and Crooled River Bridge -

Many freaky myths in the high desert of ghosts walking the road at night. Cows all the

sudden appear in the road with glowing eyes, and the vehicles travel right through them. This stretch of road is very windy and treacherous, There has been many deaths due to car wrecks.

Dayton - Ebenezer chapel -

Sightings of spirits in the cemetery and chapel. Very odd things go on there.

Damascus - Old Pioneer Cemetery -

The Old Pioneer Cemetery in Damascus, Oregon is crawling with eerie ghost activity. Many strange sounds as well as shadows can be seen and heard whenever visited. Talk to anyone who has ever taken pictures there and they will all say that their film had at least a few extra visitors floating around in it.

Elgin - Elgin High School -

Custodians, teachers, and students have all heard the sound of running and basketballs late at night in the gymnasium. One year, to a basketball game, two high school lovers were killed in a car wreck, never making the game. At night in the old school, you can hear the sounds of basketballs and running echo throughout the school.

Elgin - Opera house -

haunted by two ghost. In the late eighteen hundreds there was a gun fight over one of the local young woman that lived in town. The two men are seen fighting on the front steps with there big six shooters firing at each other. They are both seen holding there chest and falling to the ground.

Enterprise - old Graingroers -

Every night at 12:30 you can hear a man yelling, "I am going to die" and then a and you can see a flash from a flashlight and a cop car drives by.

Eugene - Fox Hallow French Immersion School - February 2007 correction: Formerly listed as Fox Hallow Elementary School -

Many people have spotted a ghosts named Opal there. At night you can always hear someone saying "Opla" over and over again. The playground shakes as if someone is playing on it.

Eugene - French Immersion School -

Reports of a weird presence, lights turn on and off at random times, a man seen walking through the handicap gym, when no ones there, doors opening, everything always looks abandoned as if nothings been touched for years.

Eugene - Kmart -

Janitors working over night tell stories of doors in the stock room opening and closing by themselves. They also reported seeing signs hanging from the ceiling swaying back and forth like they were being tapped in a row. A night stocker witnessed a 10-foot section of talking Elmo's all begin talking and moving at the same time. They are not sound activated. And there is an ominous presence that can be felt in the closed auto service center.

Eugene - Lane Community College -

The elevator in the center building is haunted by a janitor that fell to his death in the sixties. You can hear his yells for help at sunset. He likes to play tricks on the people that use the elevator after sunset by taking people to the creepy basement.

Eugene - Sheldon High school -

In the courtyard there have been several sightings of a women dressed in white calling for her daughter "Francis". Often do bushes and trees move when she gets mad that she can't find her.

Eugene - South Eugene High school -

A Student was in the high school auditorium. He went up onto the catwalks, fell off and died. His spirit has rarely been seen, but often you will hear the sounds of someone walking when no one is there.

Eugene - Toys R Us -

In the back room the upstairs is haunted by something...You are only allowed to go back there in a buddy system because of the strange happenings. Things such as boxes being thrown at you from the second floor...the lights going out in the middle of your shift radio's being turned on and off.

Eugene - University of Oregon - Stafford Hall -

Outside of room 101 of the Stafford Hall (resident hall) at the University of Oregon, a young black male has been sighted several times. Most often he was seen looking into the room with a curious look or darting around corners. He has also been seen across the street from the pioneer cemetery (less than a block away from the residence hall) standing on the corner late at night. He has only been seen late at night when the campus is quiet or empty.

Eugene - Woodland Park -

A young boy was shot on the playground. And whenever any one goes there after 12:00 they are approached by a ghost child, Who warns people to stay away.

Florence - Heceta Head Lighthouse -

Many stories abound around the haunting here, the most widely heard is probably the story of an old woman who haunts the place, the wife of a lighthouse keeper. You can stay here and see for yourself, it's now a bed & breakfast.

Florence - The Lighthouse Keepers residence -

haunted by a little old woman named Abby. She can be seen looking out windows and floating above the floor throughout the house. She is believed to be the wife of one of the lighthouse keepers room the early years of the light.

Forest Grove - Forest Grove woods -

The woods around Forest Grove are said to be haunted by a burley man who beats anyone who dares to venture deep enough into these dark woods. This dangerous ghost is linked to numerous deaths in the Washington County area surrounding Forest Grove.

Forest Grove - McMinnimises Grand Lodge -

said to first be a Masonic lodge and then later a mental institute that was shut down for a doctor mistreating patients, McMinnimises Grand Lodge is still supposedly haunted by "the Lavender Lady" who just walks around at night, and the doctor who plays tricks on people such as moving items. Apparitions are said to be seen mostly at night but in the basement they are common at any time of the day.

Forest Grove - Pacific University - Knight Hall -

which used to be the music programs classroom facility is haunted by two spirits. Activity has been observed by hundreds of faculty and students since the 1940s.

Forest Grove - Theater in the Grove -

There is three ghosts in this theater. One lives back stage and usually only appears once to check on shows. He lived in a room back stage. He is usually seen and usually minds his own business. If you are in the changing room that is only about two doors away from the room he lived in you can sometimes here him talking. The second ghost is of a little girl. she will run up and down the walkways in the house (were people sit during performances.) the foot steps are very noisy. The third ghost is a angry ghost. There is a large iron door that leads into the light room. That is were the tech crew does all of the light and sound cues. While there the door will open very quickly and slam very hard. She will also swing the spotlights around.

Gales Creek - Agaard Road -

Agaard road is on the right side of highway 6 heading to Tillamook from forest grove. between the times of 2 am and 5 am on most mornings a man named Lazlo in flannel

fishing wear can be seen where the creek runs under the road. he fishes and smokes his pipe and doesn't harm anyone. just sits there. across the road his wife Helen waits for him with hands on hips and an annoyed expression on her face. during this time smoke is sometimes seen rising from the house in which the couple used to live. lights can also be seen in the windows. the electricity in the hose has been turned off since the late 90's. Also the apparition of a young boy in blue shorts and a striped t-shirt can be spotted on the highway side bank of the creek. he is blue in the face and has water dripping from him (the water never makes spots on the rocks). he has been named Joey. he is usually seen in the late summer in mid- afternoon by the swimming hole. he whimpers and cries for his "mommy and daddy" sometimes Joey is only heard calling for his parents. when someone tries to follow hi he leads you up the side of the bank and disappears before the highway.

Gates - Outpost Village Resort RV & Mobile Home Park -

Former landlord shot and killed a man in the Jacuzzi over a betting debt. The Jacuzzi and house were burned down by the local fire department in 1998. People report seeing a ghostly figure wandering around the property. The former property manager (me) had to do a spirit releasement on some of the tenants and friends living in the resort.

Gold Hill - (Near) Oregon Vortex -

Several visitors to the vortex have seen John Lister, the Scottish scientist who discovered the area, standing at the top of the sloping floor of the old log cabin. He is usually seen resting against the wall, laughing and plucking his eyebrow. The visitors have asked the guide the identity of the man who somehow got ahead of the tour. One tour guide looked inside and recognized Lister from an old photograph. After the quick look, Lister disappeared. When the other tour guides looked inside the cabin, there was no one there. Anyone leaving the cabin by the back door would have been seen. Also, Native American legend says that horses would not come into the affected area known as the "Forbidden Ground."

Gold Hill - Rock Point Cemetery -

Many stories have been told of a strange dark hooded "ghost" that carries a lantern and wanders through this cemetery vanishing into thin air when approached. Many other stories of strange lights, sounds and visions of fire leaping from the crypts. A greenish fog is often seen floating through the area and has said to have broken windows of cars that pass through it. Some have said that the "hauntings" are a result of the Oregon Vortex, which is, located close by.

Gervais - Gervais high school parking lot -

once, back in the late 1800's the place where the school used to be was where the native Americans buried their dead. if you go there at night, when the moon is full, there are reports of Indians yelling, and a group of Indians will crowd around you,

Scan on Shakespeare's grave may hold vital clues

stratford-herald.com

6th Mar 2016 | Last updated March 1, 2016



Stratford-upon-Avon

HERALD

A SCAN of Shakespeare's grave at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon has been undertaken and the

findings from the scan are expected within the next few weeks. As the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death approaches, the radar scan – which did not involve any disruption to the tomb – may offer vital clues to a site which has never been excavated.



The Cobbe portrait of William Shakespeare.

By Simon Woodings

March 1, 2016 at 9:42 am

The grave, where the playwright was buried in 1616, carries the warning: "Good friend, for Jesus' sake forebeare, To digg the dust enclosed heare; Bleste be the man that spares thes stones, And curst be he that moves my bones."

Other members of Shakespeare's family are buried alongside the Bard. The dig is seen as an exciting development in the build-up to this year's annual Shakespeare celebrations.

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Shape Shifting Black Cats - Nick Redfern Writes

jimharold.com

February 18, 2016 By Jim Harold

For decades (some say centuries), the United Kingdom has been plagued by reports of what have become known as Alien Big Cats – or, as they are also termed, ABCs. While there are more than a handful of reports that pre-date the 1970s, it was from the early 1980s onward that the phenomenon really began to take off big-time. We're talking about mysterious cats – very often black and sometimes tan – the size of mountain-lions. Most people probably don't need to be told that the U.K. is certainly not the home of an indigenous large, powerful cat of the type that has been reported on literally hundreds of occasions. But, that doesn't take away the fact that people see such things on a regular basis – and they report them on a regular basis too.

It's not just people like me – seekers of mysterious animals – who find themselves on the received end of such reports. The nation's media (regional and national) regularly comments on the ABC puzzle. And, as the U.K.'s Freedom of Information Act has demonstrated, regional police forces have undertaken their own investigations of the phenomenon (sometimes even to the extent of using helicopters equipped with heat-seeking technology). Elements of the British Army have also played significant roles in the quest to resolve the matter.

Unfortunately, and despite intensive quests and investigations, the matter remains largely unresolved. Yes, occasionally, a lynx or a jungle cat is encountered – and caught. But, for the most part, the issue of the very large black cats prowling around the countryside remains enigmatic. Admittedly, one definitive ABC – a puma – was caught in Scotland in 1980. However, she was extremely tame and comfortable around people, was old, was suffering from arthritis, and was almost certainly released into the wild not long before she was captured. She spent the remaining five years of her life living very happily in the Highland Wildlife Park. She was christened Felicity.

But, Felicity aside, we're still at a loss to explain the massive numbers of ABCs that are said to call the U.K. their home. Most researchers of the phenomenon tend to go with the idea that the cats are escapees from private-zoos and enclosures – or the offspring (of the offspring) of large cats that escaped – or which were deliberately released – decades earlier. It must be said, however, there are some ABC encounters that are not just strange, but which are downright bizarre. I have in my files reports of Alien Big Cats vanishing before the eyes of the shocked witnesses. And when I say "vanishing" I mean as in literally. Dematerializing, in other words. I also have one report of someone who claimed to have seen – on Dartmoor, Devon, England – a large black cat in the company of a werewolf-type beast! And I have two reports of people who state they have seen large black cats exiting landed UFOs (interestingly, both cases came from the English county of Yorkshire, one in 1968 and the other in 1982). And then there's the matter of shape-shifting. Yes, really.

I have in my files a very strange story of a woman who claimed to have seen, in 1989, in the heart of England's Cannock Chase woods (a place notorious for its links to paranormal

activity), a huge black cat, as she took a stroll on a hot, summer's day. She almost literally walked into the ABC as she headed along a well-worn track near the village of Milford. Incredibly, the woman claimed that as the two stood staring at each other (she was, unsurprisingly, frozen to the spot in terror), the ABC morphed into the form of a large black dog. It glared at her for a moment and then wandered off and vanished into the undergrowth. Notably, the U.K. has a centuries-old tradition of paranormal black dogs: they're known as Phantom Black Dogs. One such legend prompted Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to write his classic Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Bizarrely, I also have a story concerning the sighting of a large black cat seen in Suffolk, England, in 1941 that allegedly transformed into a hare! Interestingly, in folklore the hare is perceived as a trickster, and also the form into which a witch can morph. And while we're on the matter of witches...

In 1984, there was a wave of encounters with an Alien Big Cat which became known as the "Rossendale Lion." It was an affair investigated extensively by Andy Roberts, the author of many books and articles on Fortean phenomena. People told of seeing the large cat. Sheep were reportedly slaughtered by it. And the local police took the matter very seriously. As Andy noted in his 1986 booklet, *Cat Flaps! Northern Mystery Cats*: "Rossendale is a collection of valleys on the fringes of the Pennines hill-chain about fourteen miles north-east of Manchester."

Andy touches on the matter of shapeshifting black-cats in relation to a woman named Barbara Brandolini, a witch. Andy notes that she "...claimed that she was responsible for the sheep killings in Rossendale." Andy continues that Brandolini stated she "actually became the panther" herself.

Indeed, she proclaimed: "I will appear as a big cat in Hepstonstall. People tend to think it all belongs in books and so on but it does not. It is very real." Interestingly, although no ABC was seen in Hepstonstall "strange animal noises" were heard in and around the small village in the wake of Brandolini's statement.

Of course, it's controversial enough to assert that large black cats are on the loose in the U.K. It's quite another thing to suggest they might be something more (or something less) than mere flesh and blood. Whatever the truth of the matter, the ABC's of the United Kingdom continue to be seen – and they continue to perplex, too.

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Shipwreck found off North Carolina coast probably dates to civil war

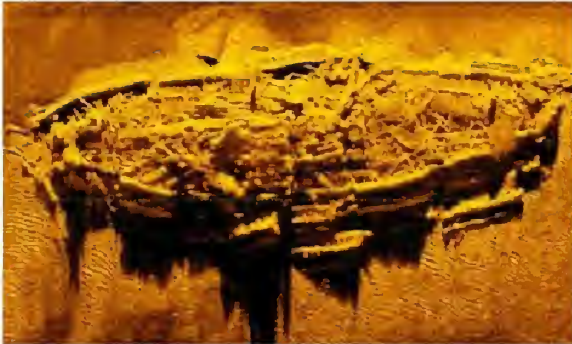
Reuters in Winston-Salem

Monday 7 March 2016 Last modified on Monday 7 March 2016

theguardian.com

Shipwreck found off North Carolina coast probably dates to civil war

Divers preparing to examine sunken iron boat, thought to be the Agnes E Fry, a confederate vessel that ran union blockades to supply the port of Wilmington

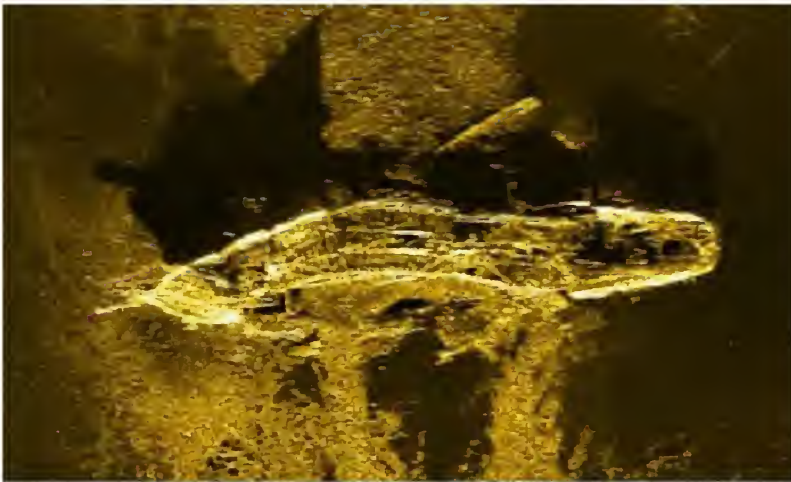


A shipwreck discovered off the coast of North Carolina suspected to be the civil-war era Agnes E Fry. Photograph: North Carolina Department of Nat/Reuters

A shipwreck discovered off the coast of North Carolina is likely one of three confederate blockade runners known to have been lost in the area, archaeologists have said.

The remains of the iron-hulled steamer were located on 27 February near Oak Island. It would be the first Civil War-era vessel found in the area in decades, said the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology.

Billy Ray Morris, director of the state's underwater archaeology branch, said he expected to be able to positively identify the 225ft (68-metre) vessel when he leads a dive team to examine it on Wednesday.



"To turn up a new wreck is a pretty big deal," he said, adding sonar images showed the vessel to be largely intact.

The shipwreck was located in the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the Cape Fear River near Fort Caswell, about 30 miles (48km) downstream from Wilmington, according to the state.

Given the wreck's size, Morris said he suspected it was the Agnes E Fry, which was used to elude union naval

vessels that sought to keep supplies from reaching the confederacy at the port of Wilmington during the civil war.

The city was the last major Atlantic port to remain under confederate control, before falling to union forces in January 1865.

Two other blockade runners known to have been lost in the area but never located, the Spunkie and Georgianna McCaw, were shorter in length, Morris said.

"It is almost guaranteed to be one of those three blockade runners," he said. "This one is spot on for where one of those runners ought to be. It's the right shape."

comments (70)

- FattMatt
18h ago

Was there a inherent design fault to lose these new ships?

- mikedow FattMatt
17h ago

It was a tricky place to navigate in the days of sail. Shifting sand bars, conflicting currents and bad weather made it treacherous. Add on having to elude patrol vessels by sailing at night also.

- ThirstyHippo mikedow
14h ago

Not sure how far they extend, but Frying Pan Shoals can still be tricky, even today. Not as much as the graveyard off Hatteras, but still a little tricky.

- william29
20h ago

Wrecksites:

<http://www.wrecksite.eu/chartDetails.aspx?2169>

- palfreyman
22h ago

Two other blockade runners known to have been lost in the area but never located, the Spunkie and Georgianna McCaw, were shorter in length,

Where Spunkie was concerned it wasn't the length that counted, it was what you did with it...

- guizerjarl palfreyman
22h ago

More a case of the size of the "ballast tanks" on board.

- palfreyman guizerjarl
22h ago

Heh.

- DeendayalLulla
22h ago

How about a museum of shipwrecks? Gold can survive in sea, without any damage. The modern ships are made of steel.

- guizerjarl DeendayalLulla
22h ago

Were Civil War ships made of gold, then? Wow!

Slavery was even more profitable than I thought.....;)

- william29
22h ago

Agnes E Fry Page 241 :

<https://archive.org/stream/derelictsaccount00spru#page/240/mode/2up>

- **william29**
23h ago

Wrecks and Derelicts, Blockade runners 'Spunkie and Gerogianna McCaw' listed, names were sometimes changed:

<https://archive.org/stream/derelictsaccount00spru#page/n7/mode/2up>

- **guizerjarl william29**
22h ago

Not surprising in the case of the "Spunkie".

- **SeafaringMan**
23h ago

"Divers preparing to examine sunken iron boat", if it is 225ft long it probably qualifies to be called a ship.

- **ImEveryonesOnKal SeafaringMan**
22h ago

A boat can be 225 ft long
A ship can carry a boat but a boat cant carry a ship

- **AlanAudio SeafaringMan**
22h ago

I remember going to France on the boat train. The boat was a lot bigger than 225ft long.

- **AlphagammaSeafaringMan**
22h ago

There are a few things that are always called boats regardless of their size, such as submarines and Great Lakes freighters.

- **jagsfan79**
23h ago

Interesting to read a little about the blockades, not least because most of the light steam ships were British built, manned by mercenary British crew and funded by private investment from Britain. They didn't stand a chance against the US Navy, though, and the success of the blockades shortened the civil war by years.

- **TellMozan jagsfan79**
22h ago

And the help by the British to the Southern states helped prolong to civil war; another shameful episode in British history, and completely at odds with the narrative of the glorious British fight to end slavery.

- **jagsfan79 TellMozan**
22h ago

Support of the South wasn't state sponsored by GB, though. Lincoln persuaded us out of it. However, there were certainly merchants and investors from the UK -particularly in my home city of Glasgow- who profiteered from the prolonging of the war, which tends to be kept quiet. You will have unscrupulous, moral cowards in any war though, it is certainly not just a British thing.

• vonZeppelin TellMoza
22h ago

Yawn. Show us some clean history then bud.

• SirJohnnyForeigner
24h ago

Vote OUT

• jagsfan79 SirJohnnyForeigner
23h ago

Well, the Rebs tried it and look what happened to them.

• UncertainTrumpet SirJohnnyForeigner
23h ago

And if anybody asks why then just shriek '*scaremonger*' or '*project fear*' at them while sticking your fingers in your ears.

• Triple750 SirJohnnyForeigner
23h ago

Nah. Moving on from the Payslip Prostitutes, the biggest issue today is the inappropriate genitalia on our statues.

• George Isherwood
24h ago

Is this the boat Belle Star went down on?

• PrivitEye George Isherwood
22h ago

No, that would have been Spunkie.

(though, if you mean female outlaw Belle Starr, she was murdered in 1889, after the war)

• mikedow George Isherwood
18h ago

I don't know, but it's rumoured that Blaze Starr went down with JFK.

• guizerjarl PrivitEye
16h ago

Is this the boat Belle Star went down on?
No, that would have been Spunkie.

Do you guys see how this is funny?

- **UncertainTrumpet**

1d ago

How can the GOP blame Obama for this, I wonder? They'll probably find a way...

- **mycrapgerman UncertainTrumpet**

24h ago

it's not Obama's fault; it's political correctness. If we didn't live in a crazy, overly sensitive world, they would have found the wreck years ago.

- **aurora1969 UncertainTrumpet**

23h ago

certainly smells like a leftie, progressive, liberal, commie, LGBT, media, gubment plot to me

- **PrivitEye mycrapgerman**

22h ago

it's political correctness. If we didn't live in a crazy, overly sensitive world,

And by the same premise we'd still have slavery (god-damn those PC pinko liberal Northerners)

- **ThePeoplesPoet**

1d ago

I love pictures like this.

Strangely haunting.....

- **synchronicfusion**

1d ago

Looks like another snapshot of U.S. Government to me. There are several pictures of Obama and company that look eerily similar. Times and wrecks have not changed much.

- **sour_mash synchronicfusion**

1d ago

"There are several pictures of Obama and company that look eerily similar."

Your solar panels ain't tracking...

- **Alex_of_Maine_1 synchronicfusion**

1d ago

Suffering from the recent solar flares?

- **JackGC**

1d ago

Very interesting. Blockade runners like this one brought goods to Wilmington, NC and were transferred by train to Petersburg where Lee's starving troops were trapped by Grant. Fort Fisher protected Wilmington, but the fort fell in Jan., 1865. Grant cut the rail connection from Petersburg to Wilmington in July, 1864. Goods were unloaded and carried to the only RR line Lee had open.

I couldn't find the date it went down. Not built until 1864 in England.

Fascinating stuff to real CW buffs. Ditto for the Siege of Petersburg between Grant and Lee. It was a deadly chess match played out Richmond. Petersburg, the Shenandoah valley and in North Carolina. Lee was trapped and Grant countered every move he made until Lee's lines collapsed at Five Forks.

Lee didn't get any help from the French like Washington did when we WHOPPED YOU PEOPLE AT YORKTOWN.

- sour_mash JackGC
1d ago

But where's the Confederate gold?

- walnut sour_mash
1d ago

In the unknown grave next to Arch Stanton. You dig.

- elgrumpo JackGC
1d ago

'I couldn't find the date it went down. Not built until 1864 in England'

The Agnes E Fry, originally named the SS Fox, was built by Caird and Company in Greenock, Scotland. Launched on 26/03/1864 and wrecked 27/12/1864.

I found this on a database of Clyde built ships. The database says total loss but her Captain, Joseph Fry, survived and was later executed in Nov 1873 by a Spanish firing squad in Santiago, Cuba for blockade running.

- Eric Mintz
1d ago

"to find a new wreck ... ?" That wreck looks well aged to me.

- paramed1
1d ago

This comment was removed by a moderator because it didn't abide by our community standards. Replies may also be deleted. For more detail see our FAQs

- lebronneJanes
1d ago

Amazing!! an article not on the presidential race,must have been oked by mistake .

- B Didur lebronneJanes
1d ago

.... yeah, until you mentioned the presidential race.

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Who Is The Man Who Laughs? The Origin & Shocking Real-Life Inspiration Of THE JOKER!

blumhouse.com



Derek Faraci

March 4, 2016

In May of 1939, the world was introduced to a detective dressed like a bat. Created by the teenaged Bob Kane and the more experienced Bill Finger, Batman exploded onto the scene in DETECTIVE COMICS issue #27. Something of a mirror image to Superman, Batman was a human with no special abilities outside of being smart and rich. He wore dark clothes and hid in the shadows. He also wore purple gloves and carried a gun at first, but that stuff was changed pretty quick.

Less than a year later, the bigwigs at DC Comics made the decision to give the Dark Knight Detective his own book. Bill Finger and Bob Kane were given a deadline – the book needed to hit shelves by April 1940. Finger and Kane got to work, along with Kane's letterer who would end up being the primary artist on BATMAN, Jerry Robinson. This is where things get... murky.

All three agree that Bill Finger came up with the idea of the Joker, an evil clown tormenting the people of Gotham. Jerry Robinson, though, claims that Finger's idea came when he said that they should create an arch-villain for Batman. At this point, Batman didn't have reoccurring villains, he mainly just kept fighting random crime lords. This idea, according to Robinson, got Finger's brain moving, and so came Joker. Robinson pretty much said that Kane had nothing to do with the creation of Joker.

Kane claimed that Bill Finger came to him with a picture and an idea for Joker before they ever discussed it with Robinson. I suppose we'll never know for sure who the second person in the creation of Joker was, but all can agree that Bill Finger is the real father of the Clown Prince of Crime.



2 Laughs

Finger's way of creating Joker was pretty clear. He knew that in fiction, great villains are often the opposite of the hero. Batman is clad in dark colors, so his enemy should be bright. Batman is dour, so his enemy should be funny. It was that thought that lead Finger to a name... Joker. Then, as these things happen, the image came to

him, a freakish grin. A smile so terrifying that it would bring children nightmares. Finger pulled out a picture of Gwynplaine, the main character of both the book and film, **THE MAN WHO LAUGHS**.

The story of **THE MAN WHO LAUGHS**, about a boy who is disfigured at the order of the king so that his face is stuck in a permanent smile, stuck with Finger. More importantly, the make-up used on actor Conrad Veidt stuck with Finger. In his first appearance, Joker's story is broken into two parts, **THE JOKER** and **THE JOKER RETURNS**.



3 Laughs

In **THE JOKER**, we are introduced to the best known supervillain in history. Joker takes over a radio station and announces his plan to kill several men as he steals valuable items from them. Then he pulls it off exactly as he describes. For some reason, this really pisses off the underworld of Gotham, and gangster Brute Nelson takes it on himself to kill Joker. Naturally, Joker kills Brute instead. Batman tracks down Joker, and is almost killed for his actions.

Joker captures Robin and is about to inject him with Joker Venom – a poison that kills instantly and leaves the corpse with a permanent smile – when Batman shows up, taking Joker down.

In **THE JOKER RETURNS**, Joker escapes from police custody two days after Batman captured him. In a spree of violence, Joker kills a police chief, steals a painting, and steals a valuable gem from a rather well off guy. He kills the well off guy too, just for kicks.

The Joker returns to the radio, announcing his plan to steal the Cleopatra Necklace from the Drake Museum. Sure enough, Joker pulls off the heist, knocking out Batman in the process.

Clearly, Batman wasn't very good at his vigilante work yet. A public figure starts speaking out against Joker (were there people speaking up for Joker?) so Joker announces his plans to kill him, then kills him.

Batman meets with Commissioner Gordon as Bruce Wayne, and together they set up a trap for Joker. Joker falls for it and ends up in a battle with Batman. In the fight, Joker stabs himself. Badly injured, Joker is taken in by Batman.

Joker is unlike any other character in comics. He has no goal, no real path. Sure, there are other psycho killers in comic books, but there isn't another one who can be used in so many ways. A writer can take Joker and put him in a funny story where he becomes obsessed with a man who cut him off in traffic, then the next time he shows up, Joker is crippling Barbara Gordon and torturing Jim Gordon. He can be innocent and vile all at once. Part of what makes that possible is that no one knows who Joker is. He just showed up one day. His origin has been told many times, by many writers, and each origin is, in a way, true because none of them are real. These are stories Joker tells, setting his origin to fit the things that will make the person he is talking to react. In his first origin, Joker was a lab worker who became the Red Hood and planned to rob his boss. He is stopped by Batman, and in the struggle he falls into a vat of chemicals, disfiguring him and driving him insane.

That story is changed slightly in the most famous telling of Joker's origin, THE KILLING JOKE. In that, Joker is a failed comedian who agrees to help a team of thieves break into a chemical plant in order to get some quick cash for his pregnant wife. Just before the heist, Joker learns that his wife has died, as has his unborn child. At the heist, Joker falls into a vat of chemicals and is... well you know.

Another version has it that Joker's wife was killed by a corrupt cop.



4 Laughs

In the story CASE STUDY, it is suggested that Joker was a big name crime boss who took on the Red Hood persona so he could do what he loved most, petty crimes. The story also suggests that Joker isn't insane, but fakes it so that he can escape the death penalty. In the series BATMAN CONFIDENTIAL, Joker is a petty criminal who is obsessed with Batman and

looks to get his attention, he succeeds, and Batman purposely scars his face and hands him over to a mob boss who Joker double crossed. The mob boss has Joker tortured and tossed into a vat of toxic chemicals.

In a story from THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD, the Atom sees a memory that the Joker has.

The memory is the Joker as a child, burning his parents alive after they punish him. Most recently, Joker has claimed that he is immortal, but was once a jester of a Pharaoh. I think Joker put it best himself when he said *"Sometimes I remember it one way, sometimes another ... if I'm going to have a past, I prefer it to be multiple choice!"*

I don't know of any other character in fiction that is like Joker. No other villain goes this long without purpose, without redemption, or without pity. We can, in some ways, understand why Lex Luthor hates Superman. We can feel for Eddie Brock, the original Venom, a man whose life was ruined by Spider-Man and seeks his own form of justice for it. But Joker, he is the truly terrifying figure of humanity. He is like the Zodiac killer, no known motive, no real pattern, and an identity forever lost to us. The everyday man who one day, for reasons we may never really understand, snaps, and begins to kill. We'll never be able to really see into the head of someone like Peter Kürten, The Vampire of Düsseldorf, though we do have some clues.



5 Laughs

Kürten was the third of thirteen children. He grew up poor in Mülheim am Rhein, a district of Cologne, Germany, and his father, an alcoholic, regularly raped Kürten's mother and sisters. Kürten claimed that he committed his first murder when he was nine. In his statement, he explained how he drowned two other boys who he went swimming with one day. His first recorded murder was in 1913 when Kürten strangled a nine year old girl during a robbery. An eight

year stint in prison for a different robbery kept Kürten from killing again for a while, but by 1929, he was back to being a monster on the loose.

Kürten started his reign of terror in February when he assaulted a woman, then a few days later molested and killed another nine year old girl. A few days after that, Kürten murdered a mechanic, stabbing him twenty times. He then went silent for six months before coming back with a vengeance. Kürten started his new wave of violence by killing a woman on August 11th. Ten days later, he stabbed three people in three separate attacks within fifteen minutes. Three days later, he killed two children, ages five and fourteen. A few days after that he stabbed another woman.

In September, Kürten raped and murdered a servant girl, beating her to death with a hammer. I suppose he found joy in using the hammer, as he would use it in his next three attacks. The women of those attacks all survived. Kürten next killed a five year old girl, stabbing her with scissors. Kürten would continue attacking women well into 1930, and he often sent police or local newspapers maps to the locations of his victims graves. Still, police did not think these murders were being committed by a single individual. Because Kürten continued to change

his methods of killing, the police were not putting the pieces of the puzzle together. In May of 1930, Kürten kidnapped Maria Butlies and took her to his home. Kürten, realizing that taking Butlies to his home was a bad idea, then took her to the Grafenberger Woods where he raped her, but did not kill her. Butlies led the police to Kürten's home. He was able to escape from the police, but was caught a few days later, on May 24th.

At first Kürten claimed he was not guilty of the crimes he was arrested for, but soon enough he confessed to them. In interviews with psychiatrist Karl Berg, Kürten admitted that his primary goal was sexual pleasure. Kürten told Berg that the amount of stab wounds or hammer blows varied because it all depended on how long it took him to reach orgasm. He also explained that the sight of blood was integral to his pleasure as it stimulated. He also admitted to drinking the blood of at least one of his victims.

During his trial, Kürten changed his story, claiming that the murders were his way of striking back at an oppressive society and that the sexual molestation of the women was never the primary motive. Not surprisingly, no one believed that bullshit, and Kürten was sentenced to death by guillotine. His last words, which may just be the creepiest last words anyone has ever spoken, were *"Tell me, after my head is chopped off, will I still be able to hear, at least for a moment, the sound of my own blood gushing from the stump of my neck? That would be the pleasure to end all pleasures."*

The life and crimes of Kürten has inspired many an artist. Fritz Lang's *M* is based in part on the life of Kürten. Randy Newman's song *IN GERMANY BEFORE THE WAR* is also about Kürten. Anthony Neilson's play *NORMAL: THE DUSSELDORF RIPPER* is a story told from the point of view of Kürten's lawyer.

Perhaps, if you're so inclined, you would like to take a look at Kürten's head. It is currently on display at the Ripley's Believe It or Not! museum in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.



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6 Laughs

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To prevent sign thefts, town might rename Katie Crotch Road

yahoo.com

Retrieved March 4th 2016 10:57pm PST USA

9 hours ago

AP

EMBDEN, Maine (AP) — A Maine town that spends hundreds of dollars annually to replace stolen street signs is again asking residents to consider renaming one of the frequent targets: Katie Crotch Road.

The Morning Sentinel reports (<http://bit.ly/1WZnelt>) a referendum to rename Katie Crotch Road to Cadie Road is being considered in Embden in Somerset County. Residents are sorting out the matter with a vote Friday and a town meeting Saturday.


Associated Press

Board of Selectman Chairman Charles Taylor says the thefts occur so frequently that "you would think every dorm room in the state of Maine should have one by now."

Katie Crotch Road sits off Route 16 connecting Embden and New Portland. It's not clear how it got its name.

A previous motion to rename the street failed in 2012.

Information from: Morning Sentinel, <http://www.onlinesentinel.com/>

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Yahoo - ABC News Network

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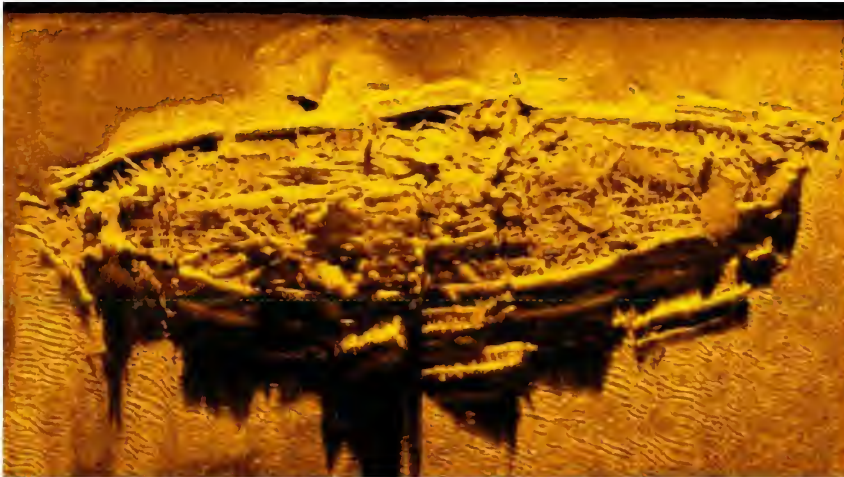
Significant Civil War-Era Shipwreck Discovered Off N.C. Coast

Mar 7, 2016

ncdcr.gov

Significant Civil War-Era Shipwreck Discovered Off N.C. Coast

The shipwreck of a large iron-hulled Civil War era steamer has been discovered in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of North Carolina, near Oak Island.



A sonar image of the newly-discovered Civil War-era shipwreck off the coast of North Carolina

Another pearl in the form of a large iron-hulled Civil War era steamer has been discovered in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of N.C., near Oak Island. Researchers and archaeologists from the Underwater Archaeology Branch of the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology and the Institute of International Maritime Research made the discovery Saturday, Feb. 27 during sonar operations.

The vessel is believed to possibly be the remains of one of three blockade runners used to penetrate the wall of Union naval vessels blocking the port of Wilmington during the Civil War. The goal of the Union blockade was to keep supplies from reaching the Confederacy through one of its most important ports and to prevent the export of cotton and other marketable items by the Southerners. The wreck is located 27 miles downstream from Wilmington near Fort Caswell at the mouth of the Cape Fear River, and is the first Civil War-era vessel discovered in the area in decades.

"A new runner is a really big deal," said Billy Ray Morris, Deputy State Archaeologist-Underwater and Director of the Underwater Archaeology Branch. "The state of preservation on this wreck is among the best we've ever had."

Researchers will continue working to positively identify the vessel. Three blockade runners are known to have been lost in the area, the *Agnes E. Fry*, *Spunkie* and *Georgianna McCaw*. These operations are part of a major project funded by the National Park Service through the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Historical, cartographic and archaeological resources have been examined for the past two years to better understand the maritime components of the Fort Fisher campaign.

Fortifications protected both entrances to the Cape Fear River from the Atlantic and were critical in keeping open a lifeline to the Confederacy until Fort Fisher fell in January 1865.

Researchers aboard the Research Vessel *Atlantic Surveyor* recorded the complete hull of the vessel. Students from the East Carolina University Maritime Studies Program will join the team as they continue gathering data on the new site as the weather permits.

The Underwater Archaeology Branch within the Office of State Archaeology is part of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Contact Information

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

109 E. Jones Street

Mail Service Center 4601

Raleigh, N.C. 27601

(919) 807-7300

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snopes.com: Story behind Demon's Alley in NJ?

snopes.com

http://msgboard.snopes.com/cgi-bin/ultimatebb.cgi?ubb=get_topic;f=106;t=000937;p=1

Retrieved: March 7th 2016 10:43pm PST USA

» snopes.com » Archived Forums » Spook Archive » Story behind Demon's Alley Hello in NJ?**Author** **Topic: Story behind Demon's Alley in NJ?**
posted 08 August, 2005 08:58 AM

I was poking around one late night, checking out pictures of abandoned properties in various states of decay. I came upon Weird New Jersey's take on Demon's Alley: http://www.weirdnj.com/_night/demonsalley.html

The Red and the Green Stamps The story totally spooked me out, and upon further research (read: google), it seems nobody has a straight answer as to why everyone dropped their belongings and moved out. The creepy part to me is that when they boarded all the windows up, they painted shades, complete with a pull cord. They say the state/local gov't had the residents relocated, but why would people leave so much stuff behind?

-Joe

IP: Logged |
posted 08 August, 2005 09:37 AM

I thought it was pretty creepy too. I went and looked up some stuff about it and found this.

Chickee Daizy quote: The first stories about the places had the usual bullshit-hype behind it. Satanic cults, ritual murders, etc. The truth? Well in a letter to Weird NJ which was printed in the following issue, the Newark Watershed Commission stated that the properties were used to house employees. Known simply as the New City Complex, the letter simply states that the properties aren't being utilized for housing. No duh. A separate letter states that homes were abandoned because of radon, which is, from what I understand the real truth. That would explain why they left behind personal items and furniture. When a home is contaminated with radon it gets into everything and little can be taken with you.

Posts: 907 | From: Oklahoma | Registered: Mar 2005 | IP: Logged |
posted 11 August, 2005 08:55 PM

It's funny how people will believe what they wanna believe when it is more interesting than the truth.

Geeto67**I'll Be****Home for
After
Christmas
Sales**

"devils alley" actually made local news for the radon quarantine. If I recall correctly there were other areas in jersey affected as well. I remember when I was a kid reading about it and thinking how sad it is that these people have to leave it all behind and start fresh. I think the article was in either the daily news or newsday (one of those NY papers that has a human interest section and occasional color photos). No actual site to link to I just remember the picture of the mother and daughter crying in the pic in the article.

As for the painted window curtans on the boards the reason is actually to keep people away, but it seems to have the opposite effect. There are groups of people who will drive around looking for abandoned property (real estate developers are one, bored drunk teenagers are another). From the road at a glance the buildings will look occupied. The reality is that it looks so creepy close up that word of mouth spreads it like wildfire. I don't know if this is the actual reason why these particular buildings have painted shades but it was the reason why other abandoned propertys in towns I have lived in and served as a firefighter have. The other reason I know of for having painted shades is so that the abandoned building won't bring down the look of the neighborhood (some housing covenants on Long Island will actually have provisions stating that if the structure on the property is abandoned for any reason it must still look in habitated to keep in character with the neighborhood).

Posts: **163** | From: **NYC** | Registered: **Aug 2004** | IP: Logged |
Urban Legends Reference Pages

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Researchers try to answer mystery of saintly skull

pasthorizonspr.com



Researchers try to answer mystery of saintly skull

Posted on December 27, 2014



The skull of St. Lucius was one of the most important relics of medieval

Denmark, and was housed in Roskilde Cathedral. However, a team of scientists recently made a study of the skull, and although an examination shows it to belong to an elderly male, the result of the carbon 14 dating leaves no doubt: This is not St. Lucius, who died around AD254.

The legend of how the skull ended up in Denmark starts in the 1100s, when the people of Roskilde felt that their new cathedral should have a patron saint to whom they could appeal for help and protection. Two priests were sent as envoys to Rome to ask for an appropriate relic. The priests were led to Santa Cecilia, where they were to select a relic from the many found there, making the choice quite difficult. They caught sight of a skull shining brightly in the sun, and so the legend goes, it turned out to be that of St. Lucius (whose name means "light"). One of the priests claimed that St. Lucius had appeared in a dream declaring that he was destined to be the cathedral's patron.

The skull was stored in Roskilde cathedral until the 1600s, but in the latter half of the century it was moved to the King's Chamber of Arts and later the National Museum. In 1908, it was loaned to the Catholic Church and deposited in Copenhagen's St. Ansgar's Cathedral.

A mix up

However, a Norwegian researcher wondered if St. Lucius' skull may have been mixed up with the skull of the Norwegian King, Sigurd Jorsalfarers . This skull had also been kept in the National Museum collection in the 1800s until it was gifted to Oslo University in 1867. Remarkably, both skulls bore the same museum number and so it was decided to conduct carbon-14 dating on the one thought to be that of St. Lucius.

The dating was carried out by Jan Heinemeier at the Department of Physics, University of Aarhus. The results showed that the skull came from the period AD340-431, and therefore

proved that it did not belong to St. Lucius (died AD254) or Sigurd Jorsalfarer (died AD1130).

Archaeologist and geologist Karin Frei studied the content of the strontium isotope in the skull (strontium is absorbed into the body through the food you eat and the water you drink). Since strontium content in the rock varies from place to place, revealing the body's levels of strontium reveals where an individual lived. The analysis shows that the man could have lived in Rome or its environs, but also he could be from Denmark, as the subsoil geology in the two areas have almost identical strontium content. However, it is unlikely that in the 1100s one would be able to obtain the skull of a man who had died in Denmark in 3rd-4th century. In Rome on the other hand, remains were stored in catacombs which provided an inexhaustible supply of bones, making relics readily available to sanctify churches in the vicinity and the rest of Christendom.

Solving the puzzle

According to the National Museum director Per Kristian Madsen, one way of solving at least part of the puzzle, is by opening the sarcophagus under the high altar of St. Cecilie Church. Both he and Jette Arneborg have visited the church to see the sarcophagus and hope that opening it will show if the skeleton there lacks a head. It may well prove that the skull from Roskilde once belonged to the skeleton in Rome, and the envoys got what they were led to/or wanted to believe was the head of St. Lucius.

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Archaeology News from Past Horizons

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The Telegraph

Telegraph.co.uk
Sunday 28 February 2016

Stubborn swan refuses to move off road during rush hour

A swan caused large tail-backs on a bridge during rush hour in Prague by stubbornly refusing to move off the road

Video footage has emerged showing a swan blocking traffic in the Czech capital of Prague on Friday.

The swan decided to sit in a car lane on a bridge during rush hour.



Police parked in front of the swan to divert traffic around it.

The stubborn swan however, refused to move as cars and trams went passed it.

Watch the moment the stubborn swan caused heavy traffic delays in the video above.

In the beginning of 2015 Maurice Mikkers started a project called "Imaginarium of Tears", an ongoing photography tear collection with personal stories at its heart.



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Stunning story of Amazon fake monkey-man as truth found 75 years later « Foxcrawl

Oct 27 2012

foxcrawl.com



The monkey man discovered in Amazon jungle back in 1937 was apparently a hoax

A picture taken in Brazil's Amazon jungle in 1937 sparked a groundbreaking story that made the rounds of the world at that time. Practically the whole planet was convinced that there was a monkey-man living.

The Dutch magazine Het Leven had published the following images with a clear announcement that a creature half-man half-monkey was indeed discovered in the Amazon jungle.

But now, 75 years since the story emerged, researchers say that everything was just a well done fake. A detailed analysis reveals that the apeman in the photos was freshly shaved, had a

hairdo and his lips feature a prosthetic as well as traces of makeup.

It seems that the man, born with some malformations, was used as an "actor" in a sick movie aimed to cause global panic.

Apparently it worked at the time. More people worldwide have announced that they saw shocking scenes with such people. A Swiss billionaire who was on a expedition to Brazil even boasted that he caught a monkeyman and killed him, but could not that his body to civilization to prove his existence.



Researcher believe this alleged monkeyman features make-up and hairdo. Photo:HetLeven



Real or fake? The "apeman" in the photo was apparently "employed" in a scary shot

Posted by foxcrawl at 11:49 pm
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<http://www.foxcrawl.com/2012/10/27/photos-stunning-story-of-amazon-monkey-man-as-truth-found-75-years-later/>

'Suffrajitsu': How the suffragettes fought back using martial arts - BBC News bbc.com

BBC By Camila Ruz & Justin Parkinson BBC News Magazine
BBC

• 5 October 2015



Still from the graphic novel Suffrajitsu

Image copyright Jet City Comics/Joao Vieira

The film *Suffragette*, which is due for release, portrays the struggle by British women to win the vote. They were exposed to violence and intimidation as their campaign became more militant. So they taught themselves the martial art of jiu-jitsu.

Edith Garrud was a tiny woman. Measuring 4ft 11in (150cm) in height she appeared no match for the officers of the

Metropolitan Police - required to be at least 5ft 10in (178cm) tall at the time. But she had a secret weapon.

In the run-up to World War One, Garrud became a jiu-jitsu instructor to the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), better known as the suffragettes, taking part in an increasingly violent campaign for votes for women.

Sick of the lack of progress, they resorted to civil disobedience, marches and illegal activities including assault and arson.

The struggle in the years before the war became increasingly bitter. Women were arrested and, when they went on hunger strike, were force-fed using rubber tubes. While out on marches, many complained of being manhandled and knocked to the ground. Things took a darker turn after "Black Friday" on 18 November 1910.



Black Friday protest, 1910: Suffragettes were assaulted by police and men in the crowd

Image caption

A group of around 300 suffragettes met a wall of policemen outside Parliament. Heavily outnumbered, the women were assaulted by both police and male vigilantes in the crowd. Many sustained serious injuries and two women died as a result. More than 100 suffragettes were arrested.

"A lot said they had been groped by the police and male bystanders," says Elizabeth Crawford, author of *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reference Guide*. "After that, women didn't go to these demonstrations unprepared."

Some started putting cardboard over their ribs for protection. But Garrud was already teaching the WSPU

to fight back. Her chosen method was the ancient Japanese martial art of jiu-jitsu. It emphasised using the attacker's force against them, channelling their momentum and targeting their pressure points.



Image copyright Mary Evans Picture Library
Image caption

The first connection between the suffragettes and jiu-jitsu was made at a WSPU meeting. Garrud and her husband William, who ran a martial arts school in London's Golden Square together, had been booked to attend. But William was ill, so she went alone.

"Edith normally did the demonstrating, while William did the speaking," says Tony Wolf, writer of *Suffrajitsu*, a trilogy of graphic novels about this aspect of the suffragette movement. "But the story goes that the WSPU's leader, Emmeline Pankhurst, encouraged Edith to do the talking for once, which she did."



Image copyright Jet City Comics/Joao Vieira

Garrud began teaching some of the suffragettes. "At that time it was more about defending themselves against angry hecklers in the audience who got on stage, rather than police," says Wolf. "There had been several attempted assaults."

By about 1910 she was regularly running suffragette-only classes and had written for the WSPU's newspaper, *Votes for Women*. Her article stressed the suitability of jiu-jitsu for the situation in which the WSPU found itself - that is, having to deal with a larger, more powerful force in the shape of the police and

government.

The press noticed. *Health and Strength* magazine printed a satirical article called "Jiu-jitsu-suffragettes". *Punch* magazine showed a cartoon of Garrud standing alone against several policemen, entitled "The suffragette that knew jiu-jitsu". The term "suffrajitsu" soon came into common use.

"They wouldn't have expected in those days that women could respond physically to that kind of action, let alone put up effective resistance," says Martin Dixon, chairman of the British Jiu-Jitsu Association. "It was an ideal way for them to handle being grabbed while in a crowd situation."

The Pankhursts agreed and encouraged all suffragettes to learn the martial art. "The police know jiu-jitsu. I advise you to learn jiu-jitsu. Women should practice it as well as men," said Sylvia Pankhurst, daughter of Emmeline, in a 1913 speech.

As the years went on, confrontations between police and suffragettes became more intense. The so-called Cat and Mouse Act in 1913 allowed hunger-striking prisoners to be released and then re-incarcerated as soon as they had recovered their health.

"The WSPU felt that as Mrs Pankhurst had such a vital role to play as motivator and figurehead for the organisation that she was too important to be recaptured," says Emelyne Godfrey, author of *Femininity, Crime and Self-Defence in Victorian Literature and Society*.

She needed protectors so Garrud formed a group called The Bodyguard. It consisted of up to 30 women

who undertook "dangerous duties," explains Godfrey. "Sometimes all they would get would be a phone call and instructions to follow a particular car."

The Bodyguard, nicknamed "Amazons" by the press, armed themselves with clubs hidden in their dresses.



Filming on the Suffragette set: A protester defends herself against a policeman's truncheon

Image copyright Rex Features
Image caption

They came in handy during a famous confrontation known as the "Battle of Glasgow" in early 1914.

The Bodyguard travelled overnight from London by train, their concealed clubs making the journey uncomfortable. A crowd was waiting to see Emmeline Pankhurst speak at St Andrew's Hall. But police had surrounded it, hoping to catch her.

Pankhurst evaded them on her way in by buying a ticket and pretending to be a spectator. The Bodyguard then got into position, sitting on a semi-circle of chairs behind the speaker's podium.

Suddenly Pankhurst appeared and started speaking. She did so for half a minute before police tried to storm the stage.

But they became caught on barbed wire hidden in bouquets. "So about 30 suffragettes and 50 police were involved in a brawl on stage in front of 4,000 people for several minutes," says Wolf.



July 1914: Suffragettes advertise a meeting at which Emmeline Pankhurst will speak

Image copyright Getty Images
Image caption

Eventually police overwhelmed The Bodyguard and Pankhurst was once again arrested. But the difficulty they had in dragging her away showed just how effective her guards had become.

Garrud did not just teach them physical skills. They had also learnt to trick their opponents. In 1914, Emmeline Pankhurst gave a speech from a balcony in Camden Square.

When she emerged from the house in a veil, escorted by members of The Bodyguard, the police swooped in. Despite a fierce fight she was knocked to the ground and dragged away unconscious. But when the police triumphantly unveiled her, they realised she was a decoy. The real Pankhurst had been smuggled out in the commotion.

The emphasis on skill to defeat and outwit a larger opponent was what first impressed Garrud about jiu-jitsu. She came across it when her husband William attended a martial arts exhibition in 1899 and started

taking lessons.

Women's suffrage - a brief timeline



January 1910: Suffragettes campaigning in London against the Liberal Party during the first election of 1910

Image copyright Getty Images

- 1867: MP John Stuart Mill supports equality for women in the Second Reform Act, but is defeated
- 1903: The Women's Social and Political party, later referred to as the suffragettes, holds its first meeting
- 1918: Representation of the People's Act allows women over 30 to vote
- 1928: Women over 21 get the vote

BBC iWonder: Beyond suffrage -

how did women battle their way into Parliament?

Garrud was soon teaching it herself and became one of the first female martial art instructors in the West. In exhibitions, she would wear a red gown and invite a martial arts enthusiast dressed as a policeman to attack her.

"As far as the suffragettes were concerned, she was very much in the right place at the right time," says Wolf.

"Jiu-jitsu had become something of a society trend, with women hosting jiu-jitsu parties, where they and their friends underwent instruction."

Garrud and her jiu-jitsu students continued their fight for the vote until a bigger battle engulfed them all. At the outbreak of WW1, the suffragettes concentrated on helping the war effort.

At the end of the war, in 1918, the Representation of the People Act was finally passed. More than eight million women in the UK were given the vote. But women would not get the same voting rights as men until 1928.

As time passed, The Bodyguard and their trainer began to be forgotten. "It was the leaders that wrote the books and set the history," explains Crawford. The stories of those who helped them were less likely to be recorded.

Edith Garrud does not feature in the new film but one of its stars, Helena Bonham Carter, has paid her own tribute by changing her character's name from Caroline to Edith in her honour.

She was "an amazing woman" whose fighting method was not about brute force, Bonham Carter has said. "It was about skill."



Helena Bonham Carter's character in the film *Suffragette* is named Edith in homage to Edith Garrud

Image copyright Getty Images
Image caption

It was this skill that helped the suffragettes take on powerful opponents. As Garrud recalled in an interview in 1965, a policeman once tried to prevent her from protesting outside Parliament. "Now then, move on, you can't start causing an obstruction here," he said. "Excuse me, it is you who are making an obstruction," she replied, and tossed him over her shoulder.

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The conspiracy theory overshadowing Justice Antonin Scalia's death

By Michelle Jaworski — February 15, 2016

dailydot.com



Here's why people think Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia was murdered

By Patrick Howell O'Neill

Patrick Howell O'Neill
Senior Writer

Stories Email

Feb 15, 2016, 3:44am CT | Last updated Feb

15, 2016, 9:04am CT

<http://bit.ly/1PWeM5P>

The conservative Internet is thundering with suspicion that Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who died on Saturday morning in Texas at age 79, may have been murdered by his liberal political opponents.

Their chief suspect: President Barack Obama.

Less than two days after the death of Scalia, the front pages of the Internet's most popular conservative news sites are asking if the American conservative icon was a victim of foul play.

The theory rests on two points. First, Scalia was found in the morning dead in bed with "a pillow over his head. His bed clothes were unwrinkled," reported the *San Antonio Express-News*. That's according to Houston businessman John Poindexter, who owns the 30,000-acre luxury getaway Cibolo Creek Ranch, and found Scalia's body late Saturday morning.

Many people sleep with pillows on their head, but the position has nevertheless provoked suspicions.

Second, Presidio County Judge Cinderella Guevara (a Democrat) said there was "no foul play" and pronounced Scalia dead of natural causes without seeing the body and without ordering an autopsy.

It reportedly took several hours from the discovery of Scalia's body for authorities to find Judge Guevara. Another judge, Juanita Bishop, said she would have ordered the autopsy.

From there, the 'pillow murder' theory went straight line to the headlines on the biggest conservative sites on the Web. Drudge Report, Breitbart, The Blaze, and World Net Daily

reach millions of dedicated, mostly right-wing American readers, many of whom took news of Scalia's death as a threat to their political hopes for the United States.

It was the decision of the Drudge Report—still immensely influential two decades after its initial rise—to run a headline about the "pillow over head" that first catapulted the issue toward the forefront. Other publications soon followed.

SCALIA, RIP...
UPDATE: 'It wasn't a heart attack'...
Declined security detail while at ranch...
AUTOPSY NOT NECESSARY...
Court, national politics plunged into turmoil...
Dem. fundraiser off death...
Was set to decide major abortion case, voting rights, affirmative action, immigration... MORE
NRA: Gun rights now in jeopardy...
FLASHBACK: Senate Dems passed resolution against election year Supreme Court appointments...

SCALIA FOUND DEAD WITH 'PILLOW OVER HEAD' DRUDGE REPORT

SCALIA: TRUMP AND FURBERG PULL...

RNC Under Fire Over Debate Audience Stacking...

"DRUDGE POLL" WHO WON THE 9TH

PAPER: Tech moguls quietly upgrading security...



Drudge Report

WORLD'S RICHEST HOME: The \$500 m...

CLAIM: Underwater cities, downloads

Pregnant Cubans and Families Breeze



Breitbart

On Facebook, some early conversation is being dominated by those who claim to have immediately known the justice was murdered by political opponents.

Even stories that raised doubts as well—a Breitbart article noted that "those theories cannot explain why, if the president had wanted Scalia (or another conservative jurist) dead, he would have waited past so many big decisions"—were countered by readers and Facebook commenters who saw sinister acts behind the justice's death.



Feel free to take a moment to read that Chuck Norris column if you need to. World Net Daily



The Blaze on Facebook
Notably absent from the



The Stories



'It Wasn't a Heart Attack': Confusion and Conflicting Reports Surround Justice Scalia's Death

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Following news he passed away, the news of his passing immediately is hot.

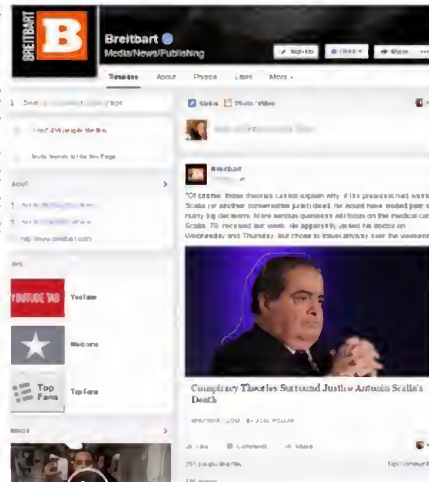
Read More



Who Obama Might Nominates to Replace Scalia on Supreme Court

The White House is scrambling to put together a short list of candidates to the fully vacant.

The Blaze



Breitbart on Facebook

fervor of murder theories is Fox News, whose website emphasizes the “natural causes” from which Scalia died, according to Judge Guevara, based on conversations with local and federal investigators, “as well as Scalia's family and personal

physician, before determining that an autopsy was not necessary,” the Fox News report reads.

The theories are likely to help energize already passionate conservatives in their opposition to Obama's nomination of a new Supreme Court Justice.

Whether the various theories cross into more mainstream territory remains to be seen. Fox News' cable television shows may be a bellwether here for noting the murmur's momentum. More moderate and liberal sites have so far not spotlighted the pillow and autopsy questions in damningly large headlines—but then, it's only been 48 hours since Scalia's passing, so the life of the murder theories are still up for grabs.

But with or without television talking heads, it's crucial to understand the reach and power that sites like Breitbart have. With around 20 million visitors per month to Breitbart alone, these publications increasingly drive the national conservative conversation, a phenomenon exemplified by Breitbart and Drudge Report's early and enthusiastic embrace of Republican frontrunner Donald Trump's presidential run.

While the mainstream success of these murder theories remain to be seen, the conversation on the fringes is already boiling up.

On 4chan, home to a hotbed of far-right users, Scalia's cause of death is being argued by a poster convinced that Obama murdered the Justice.

On Alex Jones' website Infowars, commenters warn that President Obama will wrongfully “sweep the dirt under the carpet,” while Jones himself argues that “this is the season of treason.”

“We would be fools not to ask the question was this stalwart defender of the Constitution compared to the Democrats ... flaming tyrants ... we know their is a foreign, off-shore coup over this country,” Jones said in an “emergency transmission” to his readers.

On several of the Web's self-described conspiracy theory forums, a clearcut consensus has

File: Obama Dinkless.jpg (244 KB, 475x356)

Scalia was murdered Anonymous ID 6605523 02/15/16 Mon 00:18:24 No 64173993 [Reply] > <64173888 <64173872 <64173858

Natural causes

his autopsy performed. Found dead in his bed with a pillow over his face. Clothes weren't even wrinkled from sleeping in them. People may ask "why wait 18 hours?" That's obvious. They're too afraid of Trump becoming president and appointing Supreme Court Justices. It had to be done now. If Obama was going to be able to appoint another Justice, quite possibly through a recess appointment, since the only one this year is coming up in a few weeks.

While Scalia was pronounced dead "of natural causes" — or, alternatively, of a heart attack — no qualified official had actually examined his body, and there was no autopsy performed, apparently in deference to the wishes of his family. John Plummer, the owner of the ranch, provided more-bait for speculation with an awkward description of how Scalia was found: "We discovered the judge is dead, a pillow over his head. His bed clothes were unshaken." Friends, County Judge Cisneros, Guzman said that there had been limited play, according to the Washington Post, but Scalia "pronounced Scalia dead of natural causes without seeing the body" — which is permissible under Texas law — and without printing an autopsy. "It had taken hours" for authorities to find the judge at all.

<http://www.breitbart.com/bip-governance/2016/02/14/conspiracy-theories-surround-justice-scalia-death/>

15 replies and 7 images omitted. Click here to view

Anonymous ID 6605523 02/15/16 Mon 00:48:56 No 64175058 >

>>64173993 (OP)
Holy shit this thing is getting blown the fuck out.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/scalia-died-of-a-heart-attack/2016/02/14/93862170-d332-11e5-9823-0269509999_story.html

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local/article/Texas-ranch-owner-says-Scalia-s-last-hours-6836372.php>

oh was a murder of some sort

Anonymous ID 6605523 02/15/16 Mon 00:49:30 No 64175103 >

>>64175058

It's part of conspirator best practice. Yes, have to leave clues to follow. Anyone smart enough to work it out can either be recruited to the conspiracy or eliminated, depending on their attitude.

Anonymous ID 6605523 02/15/16 Mon 00:51:23 No 64175223 > <64175058

>>64173993 (OP)

Scalia wasn't even admitted into sleeping in there.

this confirms I wasn't murdered.

there is no way to smother a man that doesn't already have severe breathing problems in his sleep without his body writhing about.

Also, who the fuck is smart enough to leave the pillow on his face, but experienced enough to be hired to assassinate a supreme court justice?

If Ginsberg dies (or even steps down) within the next 5 months, then definitely, genuine murder/conspiracy.

but this seems pretty far reaching.

4chan

yet to emerge. Not everyone is so convinced that murder might be the cause of death—but the theory is still percolating.

“They thought they could hide the truth, and then they stupidly went and told us he isn't getting an autopsy,” one Reddit user wrote on the */r/conspiracy* community. “Well we know better. Obese 79-year-olds don't just die.”

Photo via *United States Mission Geneva/Flickr (PD)*

<http://bit.ly/1PWem5P>

Daily Dot Politics

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Suspected gang leader behind 'vampire murder in Satanic ceremony' arrested

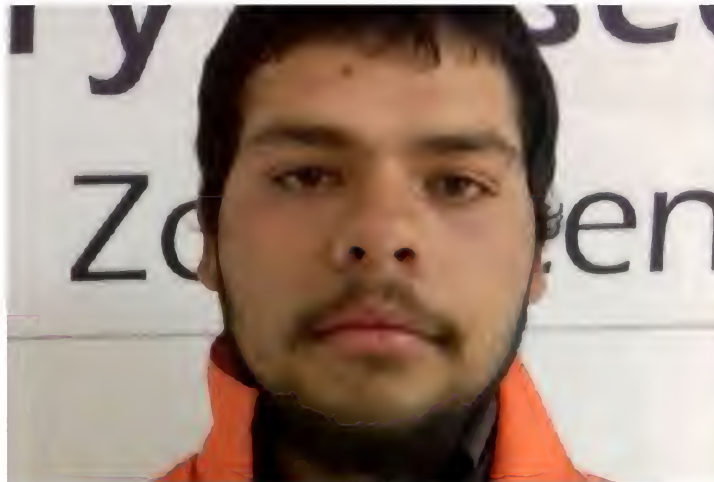
14:08, 8 Mar 2016 Updated 17:19, 8 Mar 2016 By Gerard Couzens

mirror.co.uk



Mirror email alerts

Suspected gang leader behind 'vampire murder in Satanic ceremony' arrested



CEN

Arrested: Calep is the suspected ring leader of the gang

Police in Mexico have arrested the fugitive suspected of leading the gang which allegedly murdered a cafe worker they had offered to turn into a vampire during a satanic ceremony.

State prosecutors in the northern city of Chihuahua announced Calep Acosta

Loera had been tracked down and taken into custody.

An 18-year-old student named as Iveth Lopez was held over the weekend along with two male friends, 18-year-old Gustavo Dorantes and Omar Sanchez, 24.

They are suspected of stabbing tragic Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, with a broken bottle before strangling him at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.

Police believe they attacked him after fooling him into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult called the Sons of Baphomet 1.



CEN

Attack: The friend was allegedly stabbed with a broken bottle and then strangled

His body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder off as a drugs-related crime.

Officers found traces of the victim's blood inside the cyber cafe, which belongs to Sanchez, after obtaining a search warrant when a protected witness told them how Edwin had been killed.

Read more: Trio 'tried to turn their friend into a vampire in satanic killing'

The murder reportedly took place inside the toilets late at night and the killers are said to have used bleach to try to clean up the scene of the crime.

Police chief Pablo Rocha revealed on Sunday: "This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led

by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire.

"All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we have."



CEN

Tragic: Edwin was stabbed with a broken bottle and then strangled

A local paper identified Iveth Lopez, the brunette arrested over Edwin's murder, as a Facebook user who used the fake name Eleonor Malina and described herself as a trainee police officer.

The teenager used to use as her cover photo a heart with the message: "In a relationship with Satan" and published a series of satanic photos including several relating to the Nazis.

Her cover photo when she was arrested was a disturbing modified version of Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper painting with the twelve disciples covered in blood and a satanic-like figure in Jesus' place standing over his corpse laid out on the table.



CEN

Suspects: The gang who allegedly carried out the attack have been arrested

The Facebook profile was taken down overnight.

Fugitive Calep Acosta is said to have used the Facebook pseudonym Calep Belphagor Acosta.

The Facebook page features a picture of a man in a black full-length cloak inside a graffiti-filled abandoned house.

One Facebook friend wrote to him at the end of last year: "I'd love to learn the black arts but everyone asks for so many money."

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Suspected witch slayer guilty of murder

newera.com.na

February 24th, 2016 | by New Era Staff Reporter

Windhoek

A man who claimed he only beat a woman suspected of bewitching his family and did not mean to kill her was convicted of murder with direct intent in the Oshakati High Court this week.

Moses Himelundilwa Alfred pleaded not guilty at the start of his trial and informed Judge Marlene Tommasi he assaulted Rosalia Amukwa – who was approximately 62-years-old at the time – with a stick from a Mopani tree as he believed she had bewitched his mother.

He told the court he was told by a witchdoctor that the deceased person bewitched him and his family.

He testified that he had consulted several witchdoctors who advised him the cause of his illness and that of his brother and mother was the deceased, who had bewitched them. He said his brother first assaulted the deceased, but the police decided not to get involved and rather referred the matter to the headman.

He further testified that he and his family requested the witchdoctor to kill the deceased and the witchdoctor agreed. However, when his mother became sick, he decided to assault the deceased himself, Alfred told the court.

“I cut a stick from a Mopani tree and with this stick I beat the deceased all over her body several times,” Alfred told the court. After he assaulted her he left the old woman there and took his mother to a witchdoctor for treatment.

Judge Tommasi found that Alfred knew that the blows he administered were severe and life threatening, even though he denied the intention to kill.

She said while he tried to justify his actions in that he believed he was dealing with a witch, he had testified that he appreciated that it is against the law to beat or kill a person.

Tommasi said the accused, although he believes in witchcraft, knew the law does not permit him to assault the deceased in the manner he did. According to the judge it is high time for the police and the State to investigate the conduct of witchdoctors in matters where they actively encourage their patients to harm others. She said it was evident from the accused person's testimony that he first consulted with a witchdoctor to kill the deceased, which proves the involvement of witchcraft.

According to Tommasi, the accused was able to understand the wrongfulness of his actions and act in accordance with that understanding. She said the accused admitted he wanted the deceased killed. “He admitted that he beat her so severely that he was not able to say whether she was alive. He deliberated on the issue and chose a stick, which was capable of

inflicting severe wounds. The force with which he directed the blows at the body of the deceased was so severe that it broke her arm, caused her kidneys and liver to tear and her brain to haemorrhage.”

She concluded that “the force of the blows, the size of the stick, the parts of the body struck and the fact that he walked away not caring whether the deceased was dead or alive, leads this court to conclude that the accused intended to kill the deceased.”

Alfred defended himself and Deputy Prosecutor General Johan Pienaar represented the State.

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Tales of Axe Murder Hollow continue to haunt Erie region

Valerie Myers

goerie.com



Erie author Stephanie Wincik, 57, stands in the woods near the so-called Axe Murder Hollow off of Thomas and Sterrettania roads in Millcreek Township on Oct. 23. The area gets its name from an old horror story, retold in Wincik's 2002 book, "Ghosts of Erie County," and involves the axe-wielding ghost of a farmer who was said to have brutally murdered his wife and her lover nearby. According to local lore dating back at least 60 years, the ghastly crime, which never happened as far as law enforcement is concerned, was committed in a nearby

area that has now been developed into a residential neighborhood. ANDY COLWELL/ERIE TIMES-NEWS

By Valerie Myers

valerie.myers@timesnews.com

October 24, 2014 08:50 AM

It's late one October night in the woods in the Weis Library area of Millcreek Township.

A teenage boy pulls his car off Thomas Road and parks. He and his girlfriend hope to see -- or maybe secretly hope not to see -- the ax-wielding ghost of a farmer. According to local legend, the farmer has haunted the woods since hacking his wife and her lover to death nearby.

At first as the teens wait, there's nothing, then a strange rustling close to the ground, like footsteps through dry leaves. Other sounds, like moans, approach the car.

"It's just the wind," the boy says stoutly, to impress his girlfriend. The boy tries to start the car, to get the heat on, he says, but the battery is dead. The couple huddle close for five minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, until finally, except for a strange gurgling, the eerie sounds at last recede.

When the boy tries the car's engine again, it starts. And when the headlights come on, there is blood everywhere -- on the ground and on the car and dripping from the trees.

That's one version of the Axe Murder Hollow story that's been an Erie legend for at least 60 years.

As far as police and local historians know, there never was an ax murder in the hollow off Sterrettania Road. But generations of young adults have haunted the area in hopes of seeing

the ghostly farmer and tell of stalled engines and eerie sounds during late-night vigils in the woods.

Some say that it is a gypsy king that haunts the woods since lopping off the head of his unfaithful queen, or that gypsies that once camped in the area told stories of the phantom farmer to keep others away.

If so, it didn't work.

"It's easily the region's most popular ghost story, and the most asked-about story," Andrew Adamus, formerly director of education and outreach for the Erie County Historical Society, said of Axe Murder Hollow. Adamus discussed the Axe Murder Hollow story in local folklore presentations in schools, in "Eerie Legends" programs and on haunted carriage tours before accepting his new job as community outreach and education manager for the Erie Maritime Museum.

"Millcreek is not farmland anymore, and there aren't gypsies in the area to help perpetuate the story, but it persists," Adamus said.

Stephanie Wincik tells a version of the story in her 2002 book, "Ghosts of Erie County," and on haunted trolley tours. She's heard additional accounts from trolley passengers.

"People say that on one side of the road, the grass won't grow, and on the other side, it does. Or that when you walk through the area in the middle of the day, birds will be chirping on one side of the road and not the other, where the old farmhouse used to be," Wincik said.

"There's another legend about three little bridges on the road," Wincik said. "If your car stalls on the third bridge at night, you're dead; the murderer will cut off your head."

People have told Adamus that they remember seeing the farmer's house, and bloodstained walkways or stairs.

"I'm pretty sure they didn't, because there was no actual house associated with the story," he said.

There's no historical evidence for the ax murder story, Adamus said. "It seems to be entirely made up. But the tales get created and continued. Seniors have told me that in the '50s people were talking about it," Adamus said.

Millcreek Township Police Chief Michael Tesore also said that he knows of no grisly killings in the hollow, from the 1950s or since, but he does know the Axe Murder Hollow story. He played the part of the enraged farmer in a 30-minute suspense film, "Axe Murder Hollow," in 2003. Then a police detective, Tesore took the role to help the young student filmmakers, but he was unimpressed by the tale that inspired it.

"It's an old urban legend," Tesore said.

Weis Library has been developed through the years. Asbury Elementary School, a

subdivision and upscale homes set back into the woods now line Thomas Road.

But the Axe Murder Hollow legend is still told, even online on websites dedicated to hauntings and folklore.

"One reason that the stories persist is that they're tied to something that you did in high school -- go to Axe Murder Hollow as a date," Adamus said.

"It's a kind of lovers' lane," Wincik said. "It's a place guys take their girlfriends to try to impress them."

And if the ghostly farmer or gypsy king appears after all, it's the perfect opportunity for a cuddle.

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The Long History of Teachers Complaining about Students - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

September 7, 2015 By Medievalists.net

It is not too difficult to come across teachers writing about how bad their students are. They might **blog about it**, share details of **dumb things said by students**, or write about the causes of the **supposed decline** in students' performances. However, these teachers can take comfort in the fact that even in the Middle Ages there apparently was a lot to complain about when it came to student performance.



Ms 2167 F.13V Maximilian Sforza Attending to His Lessons, Lombard, from 'Donatus Grammatica' (vellum), Italian School, (15th century) / Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan, Italy

Our favourite medieval complaint comes from Egbert of Liege, who was writing in the 11th century. He explains that:

Scholarly effort is in decline everywhere as never before. Indeed, cleverness is shunned at home and abroad. What does reading offer to pupils except tears? It is rare, worthless when it is offered for sale, and devoid of wit.

His words would be echoed again and again. The thirteenth-century bishop and theologian, Jacques de Vitry, said of the students at Paris: "Some studied merely to acquire knowledge, which is curiosity; others to quire fame, which is vanity; others still for the sake of gain, which is cupidity and the vice of simony. Very few studied for their own edification, or that of others. They wrangled and disputed not merely about the various sects or about some discussions; but the differences between the countries also caused dissensions, hatreds and virulent animosities among them and they impudently uttered all kinds of affronts and insults against one another." – read more of his comments on the **Medieval Sourcebook**.

Meanwhile, in the fourteenth-century Álvaro Pelayo, who studied at the University of Bologna, commented "They attend classes but make no effort to learn anything....The expense money which they have from their parents or churches they spend in taverns, conviviality, games and other superfluities, and so they return home empty, without knowledge, conscience, or money." – see more of his comments at **Historia et Memoria**

Here is a letter written by a 10th-century Byzantine scholar writing to the father of some of his students:

I hesitated whether to write to you or not, but decided that I ought. Children naturally prefer play to study: fathers naturally train them to follow good courses, using persuasion or force. Your children, like their companions, neglected their work and were in need of correction. I resolved to punish them, and to inform their father. They returned to work and studied for some time. But they are now occupied with birds once again, and neglecting their studies. Their father, passing through the city, commented acidly on their conduct. Instead of coming to me, or to their uncles, they have run away to you or to Olympus. If they are with you, treat them mercifully as suppliants. Even if they have gone elsewhere, help them return to the fold. You will have my gratitude.

When word of poor performance reached the parents' ears, they might be the ones that had to upbraid their children. In this letter from 12th century France, a father named Bescancon writes to his son, who studying in Orleans:

It is written, 'He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is also a great waster'. I have recently discovered that you lived dissolutely and slothfully, preferring license to restraint and play to work and strumming a guitar while the others are at their studies, whence it happens that you have read

one volume of law while your more industrious companions have read several. Wherefore I have decided to extort you herewith to repent utterly of your dissolute and careless ways that you may no longer be called a waster and that your shame may be turned to good repute.

Apparently the old trick of going to the washroom to get away from class is a very old trick, according to his comment from an Oxford schoolmaster:

As soon as I come into the school, this fellow goeth to make water and he goeth out to the common draught [ie. privy]. Soon after another asketh licence that he may go drink. Another calleth upon me to have licence to go home. These and such other layeth my scholars for excuse often times, that they may be out of the way.

Even the medieval librarian would have cause to complain about students. For example, around the year 1345 Richard de Bury, who studied at Oxford, and was the tutor to the young Edward III, wrote *Philobiblon*, in which he offers these complains about how students treat books:

You may happen to see some headstrong youth lazily lounging over his studies, and when the winter's frost is sharp, his nose running from the nipping cold drips down, nor does he think of wiping it with his pocket-handkerchief until he has bedewed the book before him with the ugly moisture. Would that he had before him no book, but a cobbler's apron!

His nails are with fetid filth as black as jet, with which he marks any passage that pleases him. He distributes a multitude of straws, which he inserts to stick out in different places, so that the halm [stalks] may remind him of what his memory cannot retain. These straws, because the book has no stomach to digest them, and no one takes them out, distend the book from its wanton closing, and at length, being carelessly abandoned to oblivion, go to decay.

He does not feat to eat fruit or cheese over an open book, or carelessly to carry a cup to and from his mouth; and because he has no wallet at hand he drops into the books the fragments that are left. Continually chattering, he is never weary of disputing with his companions, and while he alleges a crowd of senseless arguments he wets the book lying half open in his lap with sputtering showers. Aye, and then hastily folding his arms he leans forward on the book, and by a brief spell of study invites a prolonged nap; and then, by way of mending the wrinkles, he folds back the margins of leaves, to the no small injury of the book.

Of course, students had their own views about teachers. Here is how one 15th-century English student talks about school life:

*On Monday in the morning when I shall rise,
At six of the clock, it is the gise
To go to school without advise
I have lever to go twenty miles twice!
What availeth it me though I say, nay?*

*My master looketh as he were mad:
'Where has thou be, thou sorry lad?'
'Milked ducks, my mother bade.'
It was no marvel though I were sad!
What availeth it me though I say, nay?*

*My master peppered my arse with well good speed:
It was worse than finkle [fenne] seed*

*He would not leave till it did bleed -
Much sorrow have he for his deed!
What availeth it me though I say, nay?*

*I would my master were an hare,
And all his books hounds were,
And myself a jolly hunter:
To blow my horn I would not spare!
For if he were dead I would not care.
What availeth it me though I say, nay?*

Sources:

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The American civil war then and now – interactive

David Levene , Jim Powell , Troy Griggs , Daan Louter , Kate Abbott , Becky Barnicoat , Luc Torres and Stuart Silver

theguardian.com

'My family lived here during the civil war – they were farmers with 13 children. Their lives were devastated forever. There were wounded here for a year after. Bodies were left in the fields. My great uncle got paid 25 cents per skull to give them a proper burial.'



Sudley Springs

Federal cavalry face children on the side of the Confederates at Sudley Springs Ford in Virginia, March 1862. The first major land battle of the civil war took place around these springs.

Archive photograph by George N Barnard/Library of Congress

'These kids would have seen the largest battle in American history.'



Slave auction house, Alexandria

The slave pen of Price, Birch & Company on Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia, c1862. Alexandria was the second largest slave centre in the US after New Orleans. When Union soldiers entered the city in May 1861, the building was abandoned – though it was reported that a slave was still shackled to the basement floor. Today the building is home to the Freedom House museum.

Archive photograph by Library of Congress

'The South figured out how to use slavery to support the war – for every soldier on the frontline, there were seven slaves backing them up. Lincoln had to dismantle that machine,



and the way to do that was to promise them their freedom.'



Cumberland Landing

Federal encampment on the Pamunkey River, Cumberland Landing, Virginia, May 1862. The army of the Potomac, the major Union army in the Eastern theatre of the war, launched its offensive against the Confederate capital of Richmond in 1862 by moving its forces to Cumberland Landing.

Archive photograph by James F Gibson/Library of Congress

5:33

'I was raised on a civil war battlefield. When everyone else was riding bicycles, I was picking up cannonballs and bullets off the ground after the fields were ploughed.'



Brompton Oak



Wounded soldiers in a hospital set up at the plantation at Brompton after the battle of Spotsylvania, Fredericksburg, May 1864. More than 50,000 men lost limbs during the Civil War.

Archive photograph by Library of Congress

'In a two-week cascade of conflict, tens of thousands of men were killed and wounded on both sides. Most people who walk by it have no idea what played out underneath that tree.'



Devil's Den

Corpses at Devil's Den after the battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, 1863. Today, it is a tourist attraction.

Archive photograph by Library of Congress

'Photographers would come along with their wagons and set up on the battlefield. They'd drag bodies to different places and pose them. It was a very new medium, so everything was fair game.'



Evergreen Cemetery

The gateway to the cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, July 1863. It was built nine years before the battle at Gettysburg, which lasted three days and resulted in 51,000 casualties.

Archive photograph by Timothy H O'Sullivan/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

'The caretaker Elizabeth Thorn was ordered to start digging graves. She buried 91 soldiers while she was six months pregnant. A statue of her was erected in 2002, holding a shovel.'

Arlington House

Federal General Samuel P Heintzelman and staff at Arlington House, Virginia, c1862. Arlington was the home of Confederate General Robert E Lee for 30 years prior to the civil war, when he left for Richmond. Arlington House is now a permanent memorial to Robert E Lee.

Archive photograph by Mathew Brady/Library of Congress



4:36

'My third great uncle was the head house slave here at Arlington. During the civil war the Union army took over the plantation, but the slaves remained and took care of the house.'

US Capitol

The execution of confederate Captain Henry Wirz in Washington, 10 November 1865. Wirz was in charge of Andersonville

military prison where 13,000 Union soldiers died. The iron dome of the Capitol building was



constructed during the civil war, and is currently being restored.

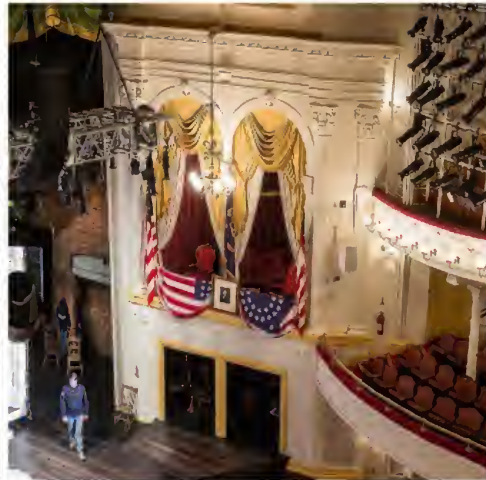


'Across the street from the Capitol building was the Old Brick

Capitol, which was used as a prison for Confederates. This Confederate being hanged was a public event.'

Ford's theatre

The president's box at Ford's theatre, photographed at the time of Abraham Lincoln's assassination in April 1865 by the actor John Wilkes Booth – five days after General Robert Lee's surrender to General Grant at Appomattox. The theatre remained closed



for over 100 years until it reopened in 1968 as a national historic site and working theatre.

Archive photograph

by Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library



Cary Street, Richmond

Burnt district in Richmond, Virginia, April 1865. With the impending fall of Richmond, the retreating Confederate soldiers were ordered to set

fire to warehouses and the armoury. The fires burnt out of control, destroying large parts of the city.

Archive photograph by Alexander Gardner/Library of Congress

'Richmond burned. They wanted to destroy everything of value – munitions, military equipment, ships, tobacco warehouses. The only thing still there is the kerb.'

Fort Sumter



Fort Sumter with a Confederate flag, South Carolina, April 1861. The Civil War started on 12 April 1861, when Confederate artillery opened fire on Fort Sumter and, after a 34-hour exchange of fire, US Major Robert Anderson and 86 soldiers surrendered to General Beauregard and the Confederate forces.



Archive

photograph by Osborn & Durbec/Library of Congress

Mary: 'My uncle John Doran was one of few men who saw the beginning of the war, and the end. He saw the Confederates advance across the field in what is known as Pickett's Charge.' Rick: 'My great great grandfather was in Pickett's charge. So Uncle John is shooting at Grandpa Dick. We say to our daughter, it only took the deaths of 620,000 American soldiers for your mother and I to get together.'

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<http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/forum/index.php?showtopic=81120>

- - - - -
The Bandage Man of Cannon Beach
Started by Isis2200 , Oct 25 2006 04:38 AM

#1 Isis2200
Posted 25 October 2006 - 04:38 AM

I just found the information I was looking for regarding the ghost that is seen in people's cars up here in Oregon. It is called "The Bandage Man" and here is how the story goes, according to one researcher:

"A bit of Oregon esoterica for everyone, and it's a ghost story to boot: The Bandage Man of Cannon Beach."

"The Bandage Man is a phantom of a man completely wrapped in bandages that haunts this small community. The bloody figure, who smells of rotting flesh, jumps into vehicles passing on a road outside of town, notably pickup trucks or open-topped cars, but also sedans, station wagons, and even sports cars. Sometimes the mummy breaks windows or leaves behind bits of bloody or foul-smelling bandages. One legend has it that he is the ghost of a dead logger cut to pieces in a sawmill accident."

"The Bandage Man is sometimes said to eat dogs and may have murdered several people. He appears on the short approach road connecting US Highway 101 to Cannon Beach, between the town and where Highway 26 intersects with 101. The phantom always vanishes just before reaching town."

"I first came across the story of Bandage Man in the book Ghosts, Critters & Sacred Places of Washington and Oregon, and it stood out because it's not the typical "sounds and thumps in the night" type of ghost story that fills books like these."

"Not surprisingly, there's not much on the web about Bandage Man; digging around only reveals a handful of sites, with pretty much the same one or two paragraph description. However, I did find this post on the MysteryPlanet MSN Group that sheds light on the origin of the legend:"

"I was googling on the chance that I might find some mention somewhere of the Bandage Man. I have been aware of this story for over forty years. For I was a child in the community where it got it's start. I knew some of the family of the kid that first encountered the Bandage Man. There is an old road, that for all the years I was growing up was known as "Bandage Man Road". It was just an old section of Highway 101 that had been bypassed when a new section put in place, but it was still accessible and wasn't very long-just a short loop off of the highway-the whole thing from end to end could be driven in maybe five minutes or so."

"This loop of road was a popular place for local kids to go park and makeout."

"That is where the story started. One night, two of the local kids were up there doing just what teenaged boys and girls do when they are parked on dark lonely roads. The boy had an old chevy pickup and his

girl and he were sitting in the cab. All off a sudden they felt the truck sort of lean, like something was moving around in the bed of the truck. They turned to look out the rear window and there looking back was a bandaged face, with only some wierd looking eyes showing through eyeholes in the bandages. The bandaged figure started beating on the glass, and the top of the cab. The kid started his engine, got it gear and tore out of there-his girlfriend screaming in terror as the man in the back continued his pounding. Any of you who've been to Bandage Man road, or Cannon Beach, know how curvey the roads are and to drive them at highspeed is dangerous. On they went, after what seemed an eternity they made it to downtown Cannon Beach, where the boy's family owned a service station that they lived next door to in green house. Once they got there, they looked in the back and the Bandaged figure was no where to be seen."

"I first heard this story back in 1960-61. And it's the original version. Some of the family of the kid still lives around here too, I know two of his brothers."

I guess you'd better watch out if you're driving around Cannon Beach, if you believe that sort of thing...

<http://ashiana.conforums.com/index.cgi>

http://www.chuggnutt.com/2005/03/11/bandage_man.html

#2 TheMeaningOfLife

You must be dreaming to know the meaning of life

Posted 25 October 2006 - 05:09 PM

What are you on? I couldnt find anything else on te internet about it.

#3 mr. E

Posted 25 October 2006 - 05:21 PM

That's a really cool, creepy story! Is there any more information on the logger killed in the sawmill accident? Like, any history on that at all, or is that just a speculative origin story? I love urban-legend type ghost stories like this. Makes me sad that there aren't really any around where i live. Oh, and why is it that ghosts and other creepy things are always intent on breaking up makeout sessions? haha Ghost-c***-block!

#4 Robert1

Posted 25 October 2006 - 06:50 PM

Excellent story. a really cool one to tell around the campfire.

#5 coldethyl

Posted 25 October 2006 - 07:39 PM

IT EATS DOGS?????

ohmy.gif

#6 RollingThunder06

Joined:09 Aug 2006

Gender:Female

Most people can hear; however, how many really listen?

Posted 26 October 2006 - 04:55 AM

Another one that I haven't heard. Are the stories still continuing or have they died off?

Is this piece of the road the only place the Bandage Man has been seen?

Posted Image

#7 Bella-Angelique

Posted 26 October 2006 - 05:32 AM

Here is a real mummy face.

user posted image

#8 ALNA70

Quote

What are you on? I couldnt find anything else on te internet about it.

Cannon Beach - On the short approach road from Highway 101 to Cannon Beach - there is a phantom of a mummy known to locals as "Bandage Man." It jumps into the back of vehicles at night. The mummy has even been known to attack at times, leaving bits of his bandages behind. Bandage Man is said to eat dogs and has even murdered several people. Many believe him to be the ghost of a logger cut to pieces in a nearby sawmill. - June 2005 Update – Some believe the haunting is limited to "The short approach". There are stories about possible Bandage Man sightings from Lincoln City all the way to Seaside (about a 90 minute to two hour stretch of road). It has also been said that Bandage Man was once a criminal who was shot multiple times by police. Once he was being transferred from the Hospital to the jail, he escaped, ran into the woods, and hasn't been seen since. This would explain the bandages, as he was still covered in them.

Shadowlands

Bandage Man
Cannon Beach/Hwy 101

An obvious urban legend, that must be noted for it's uniqueness. A phantom form who has been blamed for murdering and eating dogs, appears on the road where Cannon Beach and Hwy 101 connect. He is covered with bloody bandages and rotting, foul smelling flesh, and will jump out attacking the approaching vehicle, and sometimes even into the open bed of trucks. The legend says he is the ghostly descendent of a logger who succumbed to his death; cut to pieces in a nearby sawmill

Ghost Tours

Results of my Google search

Bandage Man Ghost Google search

#9 Lady Warrior Ravynwynn

We are here to be free to live in love...

Posted 26 October 2006 - 11:38 PM

"I'm in Oregon, and that's maybe 2 hours away.

This is the first I've heard of it. I'm going to ask my son about it.

#10 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:02 AM

Quote

Excellent story. a really cool one to tell around the campfire.

Thank you, Robert. wink2.gif

A Gift for you(See Link Below)

<http://www.google.com/search?q=Bandage+man...:en-US:official>

#11 Fluffybunny

"Of all the tyrannies that affect mankind, tyranny in religion is the worst."

Thomas Paine

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:08 AM

I have been to cannon beach many a time, but have never heard this one before...I wonder if it is something that is just a rumor in the local area that kids keep going generation after generation?

Too many people on both sides of the spectrum have fallen into this mentality that a full one half of the country are the enemy for having different beliefs...in a country based on freedom of expression. It is this infighting that allows the focus to be taken away from "we the people" being able to watch, and have control over government corruption and ineptitude that is running rampant in our leadership.

People should be working towards fixing problems, not creating them.

#12 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:17 AM

Quote

Another one that I haven't heard. Are the stories still continuing or have they died off?
Is this piece of the road the only place the Bandage Man has been seen?

There are reports of Bandage Man sightings from Lincoln City all the way to Seaside (about a 90 minute to two hour stretch of road). I haven't heard of any recent sightings, but it could be that they haven't been reported. I'll let you know if I hear of any recent sightings. :-)

#13 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:20 AM

Quote

Here is a real mummy face.

user posted image

Yikes, Bella! ohmy.gif grin2.gif That's really spooky.

#14 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:23 AM

Quote

Cannon Beach - On the short approach road from Highway 101 to Cannon Beach - there is a phantom of a mummy known to locals as "Bandage Man." It jumps into the back of vehicles at night. The mummy has even been known to attack at times, leaving bits of his bandages behind. Bandage Man is said to eat dogs and has even murdered several people. Many believe him to be the ghost of a logger cut to pieces in a nearby sawmill. - June 2005 Update - Some believe the haunting is limited to "The short approach". There are stories about possible Bandage Man sightings from Lincoln City all the way to Seaside (about a 90 minute to two hour stretch of road). It has also been said that Bandage Man was once a criminal who was shot multiple times by police. Once he was being transferred from the Hospital to the jail, he escaped, ran into the woods, and hasn't been seen since. This would explain the bandages, as he was still covered in them.

Shadowlands

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An obvious urban legend, that must be noted for it's uniqueness. A phantom form who has been blamed for murdering and eating dogs, appears on the road where Cannon Beach and Hwy 101 connect. He is covered with bloody bandages and rotting, foul smelling flesh, and will jump out attacking the approaching vehicle, and sometimes even into the open bed of trucks. The legend says he is the ghostly descendent of a logger who succumbed to his death; cut to pieces in a nearby sawmill

Ghost Tours

Results of my Google search

Bandage Man Ghost Google search

Thank you, Alna, for providing that interesting information. thumbsup.gif

#15 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 03:29 AM

Quote

I have been to cannon beach many a time, but have never heard this one before...I wonder if it is something that is just a rumor in the local area that kids keep going generation after generation?

Hi Fluffy:

Yeah, could be. I mean I've been on 101 several times in the past couple years since moving up here to Oregon, and I've never seen a ghost on that Highway. I was even there at night. So I don't know. The scary thing is Sylvia Brown believes that more and more ghosts(i.e. loved ones who have passed over) are appearing in people's cars now than ever before. Well, that's if you believe what she says, and not all people do.

So I'm proof that the Bandage Man didn't attack me or eat my dog. LOL grin2.gif

#16 GrayTone

Posted 27 October 2006 - 04:25 PM

Wow, no more campin' on the beach for me

Posted Image

#17 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 04:53 PM

Quote

Wow, no more campin' on the beach for me

LOL grin2.gif I know what you mean, Toker. and no more camping for me unless it's around a lot of people in a campground. Hey I might be abducted. And what about hiking up the mountain? Nope, they might find my body floating in the creek or an alien might come out from behind a big rock.

Gee, I need to get some R & R, either that or watch a good comedy movie. Lol

#18 GrayTone

Posted 27 October 2006 - 04:57 PM

Not to mention a good clubbing from a Bigfoot

Edited by 420_toker, 27 October 2006 - 04:58 PM.

#19 Isis2200

Posted 27 October 2006 - 05:05 PM

Quote

Not to mention a good clubbing from a Bigfoot

LOL You're so funny, Toker. grin2.gif

It's nice to talk to people with a good sense of humor. You made my day. Now I can finally stop shaking from fear. LOL

#20 GrayTone

Posted 27 October 2006 - 05:10 PM

Lmao, glad I could help grin2.gif

#21 Tooth_and_Claw

Posted 28 October 2006 - 06:26 AM

errr. his face is weird whistling2.gif i said nuthin

#22 Tejina: Ex Arctic Elfie

Posted 30 October 2006 - 09:00 AM

Clubbing with bigfoot... Oh.. Clubbing from.

I should stop reading things when I'm only partially awake.

Interesting story though. Would sort of be fun to go check the place out if I was on the West coast.

Unfortunately, I'm on the wrong side of the country.

And I have a college full of spooks to explore two blocks away.

Grins Who needs Bandages when you have a swinging spook?

#23 Not Telling

Posted 08 March 2009 - 09:21 PM

I have a book called ghost stories of Oregon from when i took a trip to Oregon and they say he only appears on a dark, stormy night.

#24 little_dreamer

Posted 09 March 2009 - 12:34 AM

Oh boy, I think I may have seen something like this as a kid. I was about 7 and walking through an apartment complex.

I saw a man standing up, wearing what looked like full bandages, on the other side of the glass patio door. He was inside, I was outside.

I ran away at that point.

I'm hoping this was just my imagination.

Edited by little_dreamer, 09 March 2009 - 12:35 AM.

#25 SienaJackson

Posted 29 December 2010 - 05:13 AM

Hello. Bandage man is one of my favorite ghost stories. I have read "Oregon's Ghosts and Monsters" and "Spooky Oregon" both of which are my favorites, but OG&M is my all time fave. I live in Lebanon Oregon, never seen Bandage Man all the times I been to those towns, and I'm glad, I like reading about him but I don't wanna meet him. I LOVE ghost/folklore, specially the true stuff!!!

#26 teemariee

Posted 10 January 2015 - 09:53 AM

My boyfriend and I had a huge experience with this. This week he just got his Chevy pick up. I found an article on ghost stories in Oregon and the bandage man was one of the stories. We live in Beaverton and there were many other haunted places we could have gone that were much closer but we were very interested in the bandage man story. So we hit 26 and I said I would drive there. Since we knew it was a possibility he would show up in the rear view he wanted to drive once we got close. We get to the point

where you can either hit highway 101 or take a right to go to seaside. So I stop right before we get onto 101. I get out of the truck and walk towards the back of the truck and he stops and starts making out with me. Weird I know, but then I told him to stop because there are people around (it's 1 in the morning, there are not people around) we get in and we drive a good 10 miles down 101 and decide to turn around. At this point we thought maybe its a myth so I look up bandage man on the internet. This story pops up and I start reading. 1. It says a guy and his girlfriend are parked. 2. They're making out. 3. They're in a Chevy pickup. 4. Bandage man is known for being seen around the area we parked, right before you get off 26 to get onto highway 101. We did not see him but we couldn't believe how similar the experience was for us. Coincidence or not, it blew our minds and gave us chills.

The Curse of Ötzi the Iceman - Modern Notion

modernnotion.com

By Josh Hrala

Monday, October 5, 2015



Jacklee

On September, 19, 1991, Helmut Simon and his wife, Erika, were hiking through the Italian Alps when they came across an odd sight: the remains of an ancient clothed man sticking out of the ice. Upon further investigation, researchers found that he probably died 5,300 years ago and was a Bronze Age medicine man or shaman who died a violent, painful death after failing to flee from attackers. They named him Ötzi the Iceman after the region where he was found. Since then, seven people

involved in his excavation have died, leading many to believe Ötzi the Iceman was cursed.

The first person to die was Dr. Rainer Henn who originally performed Ötzi's autopsy. According to *The Independent*, Henn, a 64-year-old man who worked with Ötzi's body with his bare hands, was on his way to give a lecture about his findings when he crashed his car and died.

Kurt Fritz, the man who took Henn to Ötzi's resting place in the mountains, was next. In 1993, Fritz was leading a group of tourists through the Alps when a sudden avalanche killed him. Though there were multiple people with him, he was the only to perish in the freak event.

The deaths kept rolling in. In 2004, Rainer Hölzl, a man who filmed an exclusive documentary on Ötzi died of a sudden brain tumor. The same year, in October, Helmut Simon, Ötzi's original finder, left for another expedition into Alps. This time, however, he was alone. Three weeks later, his body was discovered below a 300 foot cliff frozen in ice just like Ötzi. At Simon's funeral, Dieter Warnecke, the man who found Simon's body, died suddenly of a heart attack at age 45. In 2005, Konrad Spindler, the main financier of Ötzi's dig, died of complications brought on by multiple sclerosis. The final death was of Dr. Tom Loy who analyzed Ötzi's DNA. According to *BBC*, no one really knows what happened to him.

Even though many of these deaths are from normal circumstances like health issues or hiking in dangerous areas, many have attributed them to Ötzi because the researchers were careless in handling his body. Instead of gently removing him from the ice, the team had apparently violently excavated the area, which, in turn, released some sort of curse reminiscent of King Tut's. Another thing that doesn't make sense with Ötzi's curse is the fact that hundreds of researchers have studied him over the years without any ill effects.

No matter what you believe, it's safe to say that Ötzi sure seems to bring on the bad. At least the good news is that his discovery has helped researchers across the world learn more about our past... at least before they died.

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Saturday, January 2, 2016

The Elmira Tragedy.

2 comments

Little Murders



WILLIAM MEINKE, ALIAS MENKEN.

Two boys playing near a bridge at Carr's Corners outside of Elmira, New York on Sunday, January 6, 1884 found the body of a young woman frozen in the snow under the bridge. The coroner determined that the woman had been murdered, causing a sensation in the small town of Elmira, on New York State's Southern Tier.

The unidentified woman had been seen in several Elmira beer shops the previous Friday afternoon, accompanied by a young German man. She had displayed a large roll of bank notes and was wearing some distinctive jewelry—a gold watch on a slender gold chain, large old-fashioned gold bracelets, a large ring, earrings with long pendants, and a gold breastpin. Neither the money nor any of the jewelry were found on the body.

No one knew the man who was with her, but those who saw him provided a fairly thorough description. He was slender, five feet, eight inches tall, with a light complexion, brown hair and had a light mustache and side whiskers. His left eyelid had a peculiar droop. From some comments he made it was suspected that he had recently been an inmate at the Elmira Reformatory.

Officials at the Reformatory confirmed that a man fitting that description had been released on parole, in 1882. His name was William Menken (aka Meineke) who had been sent to the Reformatory after being convicted of robbery New York City. His left eye was glass.

The District Attorney of Chemung County telegraphed the information on Menken and the stolen jewelry to Inspector Thomas Byrnes of the New York City Police Department, who put his detectives on the case. They identified the woman as a 23-year-old servant at a residence on Eighty-Ninth Street. Menken had taken her away on New Year's Eve and they were to be married immediately. The spelling of her name was never fully nailed down, it was reported as Katie Bradschoff, Bradshepf, Branerhoff, Broedehoft, etc.

Detective-Sargent William Adams who had arrested Menken in 1879 for a robbery in the Bowery, learned that he had a sister living in Flatbush, Long Island. The police watched the house, and arrested Menken when he arrived. In his possession were \$160 in banknotes, and jewelry that perfectly matched the description of the jewelry worn by the murdered girl. Menken was arrested and sent back to Elmira for trial.

The citizens of Elmira extremely pleased with Inspector Byrnes's quick solution to their mystery, and in April presented him with an elaborately framed set of resolutions expressing the town's gratitude. When Menken was convicted of first-degree murder, later that month, and sentenced to be hanged, the matter appeared to be fully resolved. But it would not be that simple.



THOMAS BYRNES
Inspector of Police New York

Menken's defense was that Katie had accidentally fallen from the bridge, hit her head on a post and died. He left her there and returned to New York City because he did not think anyone would believe the story. The jury in his trial had been taken to the bridge to view area where the body was found. There was no post when they saw it. After his conviction, Menken's attorneys were able to prove, to the satisfaction of Judge Murray, that the post had been removed between the time of the death and the time the jury saw the spot. He overturned the verdict and granted Menken a new trial.

The people of Elmira were livid over the judge's decision and took to the streets to hang Menken in effigy. The *Elmira Sunday Tidings*, published a scathing article condemning the judge's action. They changed their tune and published a retraction, however, when Judge Murray sued the paper for libel.

Menken was tried again the following December. The defense was granted a change of venue, and this time the trial was held in Binghamton, Broome County. Once again, Menken was convicted of first-degree murder and the defense filed an appeal.

While awaiting the outcome of his appeal, Menken was held in the Binghamton jail. In early January 1885, Sheriff Brown travelled to Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, leaving the jail in the charge of two inexperienced deputies, Fred and Jacob Oskerman. Menken was housed in the south corridor, where he was the sole prisoner and had free reign of the corridor except when locked in his cell at night. The night of January 14, Menken used an age-old trick— a "threadbare and moth-eaten trick" in the words of the *Police Gazette*—fashioning a dummy under the covers of his bunk. He hid in an empty cell, slipping out the open corridor door when Fred Oskerman came to lock him down for the night. It was several hours before Oskerman discovered his error and aroused the town with the sound of fire bells.

Menken managed to get twenty-two miles away before he was discovered in a haystack in a barn near Owego, New York. He was returned to Binghamton and kept under close watch thereafter.

On May 23, the appeals court upheld Menken's verdict and he was sentenced to be hanged in the Broome County jail on July 2. Menken continued to hope for executive clemency, but losing all hope, he broke down completely and had to be sedated to be led to the gallows. Two hundred people witnessed the hanging. "There was no sympathy expressed for the wretch," said *The Allegany County Democrat*, "the verdict being unanimous that it served him right."

Though he died proclaiming his innocence, after his death Menken's attorney produced a written document, signed by William Menken, confessing to the murder.

Sources:

- "[Inspector Byrnes]." *New York Times* 9 Apr 1884.
- "[Menken, the murderer]." *Williamsport Sun-Gazette* 23 Jun 1884.
- "A Sensational Murder Trial.." *New York Herald* 2 Dec 1884.
- "Arrest on the Charge of Murder." *Boston Journal* 11 Jan 1884.
- Defenders and offenders*. New York: Buchner & Co, 1888.
- "How Menken Escaped." *National Police Gazette* 7 Feb 1885.
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- "Menken Hangs." *Wellsville Allegany County Democrat* 8 Jul 1885.
- "Menken Swings." *Wellsville Daily Reporter* 28 Apr 1884.
- "Murderer Menken." *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader, the Evening News* 24 Jan 1885.
- "Murderer Supposed Captured." *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune* 11 Jan 1884.
- "Summary of the News." *New York Herald* 10 Dec 1884.
- "Suspected Of The Elmira Murder.." *New York Tribune* 11 Jan 1884.

"The Elmira Tragedy." *Cleveland Leader* 11 Jan 1884.

"The Murderer Menken Escapes." *The New York Times* 15 Jan 1885.

Posted by Robert Wilhelm

2 comments :

cheryl says: January 7, 2016 at 10:58 AM

I lived in Elmira for 12 years back in the 1980s and early 90s. I've read up on a lot of city history, but they left this story out!

parafan16 says:

January 12, 2016 at 12:22 PM

poor girl. he left the body,robbed it, and claimed he didn't do it, because innocent people always rob their dead loved ones! At least he was hung. nowadays he'd be given restitution for emotional anguish or some nonsense along with an exhaustive apology.

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The Evil Spirit that Terrorized a Medieval Village - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

August 16, 2015 By Medievalists.net

Today's horror movies could make use of this story from the ninth-century, of how an evil spirit terrorized a village, and the attempt to get rid of it, which seems to be one of the earliest recorded exorcisms from the Middle Ages.



evil spirit - photo by craig Cloutier / Flickr

The account from the *Annals of Fulda*, an East Frankish account that offers a history of events taking place in Carolingian Europe during the ninth-century (the annals end in the year 901). While most of the *Annals* deal with internal conflict among the Carolingians as well as the Viking raid across Europe, it also offers the story of a strange event that take place in the year 858:

There is a certain villa not far from the town of Bingen, called 'Caput Montium'

because the mountains along the valley of the Rhine begin here (though the common people corrupt the name to 'Chamund'). Here an evil spirit gave an open sigh of his wickedness. First, by throwing stones and banging on the walls as if with a hammer, he made a nuisance of himself to the people living there. Then he spoke openly and revealed what had been stolen from certain people, and then caused disputes among the inhabitants of the place.

Finally he stirred up everyone's hatred against one man, as if it were for his sins that everyone had to suffer such things; and so that he might be the more hated, the evil spirit caused every house which the man entered to catch fire. As a result the man was forced to live outside the villa in the fields with his wife and children, as all his kin feared to take him in. But he was not even allowed to remain there in safety, for when he had gathered in and stacked his crops, the evil spirit came unexpectedly and burnt them. To try to appease the feelings of the inhabitants, who wished to kill him, he took the ordeal of hot iron and proved himself innocent of the crimes which were alleged against him.

Priests and deacons were therefore sent from the town of Mainz with relics and crosses to expel the wicked spirit from that place. As they were saying the litany and sprinkling holy water in a house where he had been particularly active, the old enemy threw stones at men coming there from the villa and wounded them.

After the clerics who had been sent there had departed, the same devil made lamentable speeches in the hearing of many. He named a certain priest and said that he had stood underneath his cope at the time when the holy water was being spread around the building.

Then, as men crossed themselves in fear, he said of the same priest, "He is my servant. For anyone who is conquered by someone is his servant; and lately at my persuasion he slept with the daughter of the bailiff of this villa." This crime had not before been known to anyone except those who had committed it. It is clear that as the Word of Truth says, "nothing is hidden which will not be revealed" (Matthew 10:26).

With these and similar deeds the apostate spirit was a burden to the above-mentioned place for the course of three whole years, and he did not desist until he had destroyed almost all the buildings with fire.

The *Annals of Fulda* were translated by Timothy Reuter and published by Manchester University Press in 1991. **[Click here to visit the publisher's site for more details.](#)**

See also: **The Medieval Walking Dead**

Filed Under: Features Tagged With: Folk Studies, Germany, Ninth Century

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The Female in Mourning Jewels

deadmaidens.com

Exploring the relationship between women & death. All things danse macabre to death row. Examining the deadly & celebrating the 'dedicated'

The Female in Mourning Jewels

Posted on 29/02/2016 by deadmaidens

Hayden Peters, founder and creative director of Art of Mourning gives us an illustrated tour of female mourning jewellery. With the mourning industry of the 16th-19th centuries we learn about different trends in design and how this reflects cultural attitudes and social norms of the time. From memento mori to locks of hair and cutting diamonds Hayden provides a truly fascinating journey through mourning practice, fashion and identity.

– Hayden Peters –



Classical female, pointing to the heavens with willow and faith, hope, charity symbolism. Painted in sepia, c.1780. Memento mori ribbon slide. Faceted crystal with cherubs and skeleton stating 'come ye blessed', c.1680. Female pointing out to sea. Watercolour, c.1810. Black enamel brooch with hair, c.1840 with Gothic Revival lettering. Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring, c.1889. Vulcanite pendant with pearl cross and wheat sheafs, c.1870s. Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring with serpent symbolism. c.1953. Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring.



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Hayden is a creative director, jewellery historian and writer/founder of www.artofmourning.com. For over 10 years, Hayden has been writing, studying and teaching mourning and sentimental jewels as well as the fashion and art that surrounds them. Hayden can also be found on: [Instagram](#)

Visual



Classical female, pointing to the heavens with willow and faith, hope, charity symbolism. Painted in sepia, c.1780.

representation of the female in mourning is a literal one. Of the major symbols that replaced the memento mori style of the pre-1760s, the female became the one symbol to become the primary focus of the jewel. Archaeological excavation was an important element to the growth of classical culture in the 18th century. Digs in Pompeii and Herculaneum had discoveries in 1711, but resumed with major excavations in 1738, igniting the passion and interest in artists, thinkers and antiquarians. What stemmed from this was a change in how death was represented in jewellery. A major humanist movement in the Enlightenment followed the Neoclassical era, which allowed for questioning of traditional concepts of life and social structure. Since the Reformation and its impact upon religious thought, society was changing to look at itself in an individual way. Guilds, education and disseminated thought allowed for people to learn new concepts that were prohibited from earlier generations. New skills and crafts meant that an individual could break away from the family unit and learn something that was outside of the family craft. By the Neoclassical period of the late 18th century, industrialisation allowed for middle classes to grow new wealth, something the merchant classes had previously began to appreciate through importing and exporting goods globally. Hair weaving was one of the earliest modern professional female practices, with women being employed in the late 17th century to weave hair into a jewel. With these factors in mind, the female as a representation of the human experience became the focus of a jewel's symbol, then the focus of a family in mourning.



Memento mori ribbon slide. Faceted crystal with cherubs and skeleton stating 'come ye blessed', c.1680.

Memento mori was important for its dominance and direct action of its representation. You will die and you will be judged. Your body and its desecration are facts of living. Having these elements within a jewel are grounding and provoke a visceral response in the person who is viewing the jewel on the person who is wearing it. By the Neoclassical period, allegory had taken its place. Mourning in a jewel was now a weeping female figure at the centre of the jewel, flanked by an urn, broken column, weeping willow or other scenario of idyllic peace. Her dress was typically that of the classical Greek figure,

featuring an under-bust dress, with many folds draping around her. Profiles of the lady also have the classical Roman or Greek nose and curled hair, creating the symbol of mourning that would last from c.1760-c.1820. Miniatures with individual portraits of a gentleman or female in modern dress and high detail are closer to actual portrait miniatures, rather than being the allegory of the female in mourning. Allusions to her being a Madonna figure are consistent with many of the Greek and Roman symbols of the time having dual meanings, much like 'putti' and 'cherub' associations, as this made for easier cultural exchange between societies which were either Protestant or Catholic. Regardless, the female is the primary element of mourning, she is the human sadness, relating to male or female. She is an aspiration, something that all society can identify with and unite behind. Much like the matriarchal figure, she is the mother of grief and the source of our own lives.



*Female pointing out to sea.
Watercolour, c.1810.*

It was the Victorians that used the female element and made it the literal one. By the 1840s, European society had suffered a massive cultural upheaval and it needed stability. Where else to look for stability, but in that of the family unit itself? Victoria and her government were very wary of the importance of stability and how cultural values could impact a society. Previously, the monarchy had been the primary focus for fashion and change. Any threat to this would impact back upon the culture of a society and threaten it. France had existed through the Terror and Napoleon, Britain had lost the Americas and questioning of the monarchy as the figureheads for much of the socio-political changes meant that they needed to find a way to create solidarity.

Art and fashion are primary elements of maintaining a cultural identity. Both require a high level of income to create an industry that can be sustainable. If there is consistent change in fashion, milliners, jewellers, importing of fabrics and trade of goods maintain a healthy economy. Society craves change and style, all to show personal wealth, familial wealth and establish a personal identity. For the Victorians, a shift away from the excess of Neoclassicism to a new movement, known as the 'Gothic Revival' in jewels, put an emphasis on the values of the medieval period, with Christian morality and values. Dominating gold floral elements bordered lockets, rings and brooches, with thick bands of black enamel featuring the statement of 'IN MEMORY OF' boldly stated that a family was in mourning.



Black enamel brooch with hair, c.1840 with Gothic Revival lettering.

Popularising sentimentality was something Queen Victoria was exceptional at maintaining. A sentimental lady in her own right, often keeping the hair of others and sharing her own in lockets, society copied her mannerisms and the jewels of mourning and sentimentality became the socially correct items to wear. Mourning was starting to become fashion. The impact of this upon the family put all the emphasis of mourning and identity upon the matriarch. The female was now the literal representation of mourning and sentimentality in the household. Standards of mourning stages became mandatory, with the three stages being adhered to before the lady

could emerge from mourning and re-enter society. Rules about wearing flat black and no reflective surfaces for the first stage, introducing jewels, lilac and red for half mourning, then further colours for the third stage needed to be respected, otherwise it was a poor reflection upon the family.

When one considers the impact upon this for a lady in the mid-19th century, it is an imposition that men did not have. A lady, who was living in a time of higher mortality, might suffer a family member's death, be it extended or not, then have to live further and further into periods



Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring, c. 1889.

of mourning. Dresses and the expense around mourning were high, so existing dresses would be dyed or amended with ribbon to enter mourning. As the 19th century continued, some would never leave mourning at all.



Vulcanite pendant with pearl cross and wheat sheafs, c. 1870s.

Victoria's entrance into perpetual mourning from 1861 became a fashionable catalyst. Her personal tastes around sentimentality had already engrained mourning and jewels into popular fashion, with giving hairwork in a locket a typical gift. However, society now had a static monarch, so how could they maintain popular

fashion? There was no seasonal change from her, so other places were looked to as being the height of fashion. Before this could happen, however, mourning and popular fashion became one. Whitby Jet and its imitators carved and pressed black jewels at an enormous rate. By the 1870s, the annual turnover of the Whitby jet industry was said to be over one hundred thousand pounds, with a jet craftsperson earning between three and four pounds a week. Jet and lighter jewels that could maintain hair were more fashionable from the 1850-1870 period, as fashion became larger, such as the crinoline, so these jewels were larger and lighter to wear. The government followed, allowing for alloys in jewels to be allowed in the Hallmarking Act of 1851. Women, in their larger fashion, were the objects of sentimentality, becoming a walking canvas for mourning or sentimentality.

With a generation of women in mourning, challenges to a very static style came from women who wanted to change. No more would they want to follow Victoria's self-imposed mourning rituals or wear the popular black dress, regardless of if they were in mourning or not.

The entire mourning industry was in a decline from the mid 1880s – an entire generation of a culture with once fluid fashion changes had been living under the shadow of mainstream mourning culture from 1861, due mostly to a queen perpetually in mourning. By 1887, for Victoria's golden jubilee, she had started to lessen the mourning restrictions and re-emerge in public, but there was even a cultural shift that had begun with women who lived as the centre of household mourning starting to rebel against the older ways. Style had remained largely consistent with little movement since the 1860s, though women's clothing had lost the heavier crinolines, bold mourning jewels remained bold and prominent. This female paradigm shift had started to become an outward rebellion, with some women even wearing their veils



Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring with serpent symbolism. c.1953.

backwards as an act of defiance. The Art Nouveau movement emerged as a breath of fresh air, with its opulent, organic, styles, using nature as its dominant motif, rather than retroactively mining the past for revival styles. Jet was not conducive to this new art movement and did not adapt. Black stones used as a material following this period in Art Deco were often onyx or glass, which became, and remains, popular to this day. New wealth from the Americas funded the artisans behind these new movements. From 1900, there was a significant split in jewellery styles. Court-worn jewels were still based around the Rococo Revival style and using

highly privileged, material-based gems, such as diamonds. This was normal around European Courts and remained consistent from the 19th century. In Europe, the organic influence of Art Nouveau and its use of coloured gems and enamel became popular. The Arts and Crafts movement flourished in Britain as a response to mechanisation; bringing back a return to traditional crafts. This remained consistent up to the beginning of the First World War.

South African diamonds produced 90% of the world's diamonds in 1890, with a slight interruption by the Boer War in 1899-1902. White gold and platinum were used to enhance the look of the diamond, leading this to become one of the most popular styles in fashion for the time. Its influence can be seen today, with 'white' jewellery being more popular than the silver influence of the 1880s simply because diamonds were enhanced by the white colouring of the metal and diamonds themselves were cheaper and more accessible.



Black enamel 'IN MEMORY OF' ring.

With all these impacts against the mourning industry, the female had finally found an independent identity that was not only symbolic. Even though World War I and the global pandemic of influenza in 1918 brought about a massive impact to the global mortality rate, outside of court mourning, mourning as a standard did not reemerge. Independence and personalisation in mourning, outside of religious belief, became insular. A person can wear a jewel for another because they love that person, not because it was a social standard. A man did not have to put aside a great portion of his savings to a burial society

in order for the perfect funeral and familial outfitting. Death was what now a family made of it. Mourning is not gender or racially specific. It is a feeling that one shares for the person one loves. In terms of jewellery and the mourning industry of the 16th-19th centuries, it was one of

the most important fashions that a lady was required to follow, as its importance reflected the entire family. This expectation removes the basic truth to what mourning in fashion really is, which is simply love.

This entry was posted in Guest Post and tagged Art, Art of Mourning, Culture, Design, Fashion, Female, Female Identity, Gender Roles, History, In Memory, Jewellery, Memento Mori, Mourning, Mourning Practice, Remembrance, Society, Trends, Visual. Bookmark the [permalink](#).

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There was once a fifth suit of playing card (because winning with four wasn't hard enough)

shortlist.com

There was once a fifth suit of playing card (because winning with four wasn't hard enough)



19-green-suit.jpg

By Ben Scott
04 Mar 2016

Playing cards haven't always been the uniform, neatly stacked, beautifully illustrated bits of card that they are today.

There wasn't much deviation in a 52 card deck (no, UNO does not count) unless you go all the way back to the 1930s, when the United

States Playing Card Company introduced a 5th suit in their 65 card deck.

So you had the clubs, spades, hearts, diamonds and... an eagle. In green, no less. That varied slightly over here in Blighty, with a blue crown used as the symbol instead, but the idea was the same. Five of a kind and much more confusing full houses were likely here.

They were mainly intended for use in games of Bridge, but collectors have pointed out that the decks of 65 included rules for 5-suit poker, among others.

The idea came from a Viennese psychologist named Walter Marseille, who wanted to make the games more interesting. That he certainly accomplished. It didn't last very long (no longer than the end of World War II in fact), as people preferred the simpler, less complex 52 card deck and it stuck.

Imagine, for a moment, playing the Ace of Eagles. Or the King of Crowns? Blergh, no thanks.

Whatever next? Four goal football? Three hole golf? Multi-level chessboards? Oh wait, that last one's already been done.

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THE HOUSE ON RIDGE AVENUE: AMERICA'S ORIGINAL "MOST HAUNTED" HOUSE

prairieghosts.com

DEAD MEN DO TELL TALES



THE HOUSE ON RIDGE AVENUE

*The Hauntings & Horror of America's Original "Most Haunted" House --
Or Was it Really?*

For many years, stories circulated about what was called the "most haunted house in America". To look at the place, where it was located on the north side of Pittsburgh, one might never suspect what dark secrets lingered inside. There were tales of bizarre murder, human experimentation and gruesome death told about the house and visits to the residence inspired horror stories and even a great inventor's fascination with death and the afterworld. If any building deserved the reputation for being America's most haunted house, it was this one!

In truth, the House on Ridge Avenue was not one of America's greatest haunts but one of it's greatest hoaxes instead!

The story of the infamous "House on Ridge Avenue" has always been one of my favorite tales of ghosts, horror and the supernatural. I ran across this story for the first time back in 1979 and never forgot it. It chilled me to the bone and perhaps because I was at such an impressionable age then, I never doubted that the story was true. In the years that followed, my interest in the story never faded and as time passed, I should have realized that something was not quite right about it, but I never did. Or perhaps I never wanted to realize it or to doubt that the tale was not an authentic one. I refused to see that the story of the "Original Most Haunted House in America" seemed almost too good to be true.

It seemed too good to be true - simply because it was.

I can't help but be embarrassed now as I look back and wonder how I didn't miss the signs in the first place. The story of the House on Ridge Avenue has appeared in at least one of my books on ghosts and I have even done magazine articles about it as well. By late 2003, my faith in the story had wavered and I became determined to try and track down the details of the story. It can sometimes be difficult to trace a story that occurred quite some distance away from you (which is my only excuse for being hoodwinked by the story for as long as I was) but I decided not to let the miles between Illinois and Pittsburgh stand in the way. If someone knew the facts behind this story, I wanted to find them.

stunned the city. "As houses collapsed and chimneys toppled," they wrote, "brick, broken glass, twisted pieces of steel and other debris rained on the heads of the dazed and shaken residents who had rushed into the streets from their wrecked homes, believing that an earthquake had visited the city."

Even the rescue workers and fire fighters who arrived on the scene were injured and killed when weakened structures collapsed on top of them. Entire neighborhoods were flooded by broken water mains while huge sections of the city lay in ruins. Sections of the giant gas storage tanks were later found more than a thousand feet away. Rough estimates from the following day listed at least twenty-eight killed and more than six hundred people injured from the explosion. Rescue crews dynamited the ruins in a search for the bodies of the dozens of others who were still missing. Thousands were left homeless by the destruction.

Mounds of rubble and debris marked the spots where buildings had once stood. At one place though, not even bricks and stone remained. At 1129 Ridge Avenue, just two blocks away from the blast site, there was nothing but a smoldering crater. Although homes on both sides, and across the street, from where the Congelier mansion had stood were heavily damaged, they were still standing. Yet where the "most haunted house in America" had stood, and where Julia Murray's proclaimed "evil presence" had lingered, there was nothing. A hole that nearly eighty-five feet deep was all that remained. It was the only house in the vicinity of which no trace could be found.

Today, the Carnegie Science Center occupies the site of the Equitable Gas Company tanks and the terrible explosion is only a faint memory from the past. The house on Ridge Avenue is all but forgotten. Its location is the present-day site of the Route 65 and Interstate 279 interchange. Nothing from the days of Dr. Brunrichter, the Congelier's, or the luckless Italian immigrants still lingers, or does it? If it is possible for the spirits of the past to still wander restlessly along a busy highway, then it would be at this place where such spirits would dwell -- the place where one of the most evil houses in the country could be found.

THE REAL STORY: PART 5

Spooky ending, huh?

Unfortunately, it's not accurate either. The gas storage tank at the Equitable Gas Company did explode on November 14, 1927 and killed 24 people in the surrounding area. The concussion and subsequent fire did wreak havoc in this part of the city and it destroyed many houses and buildings, leaving hundreds of people homeless. The details of the destruction that are recounted in the legend of the house are true and accurate - for the most part.

Where things veer off course is in regards to the house at 1129 Ridge Avenue. In every version of the story, the house is destroyed by the blast, leaving only an ominous crater behind - as if it was sucked down into the very pit of hell. While

this makes a fitting ending to the dramatic tale of America's "original most haunted house", it's not the away that it happened in real life. In truth, the house only suffered minor damage from the explosion. A number of windows were broken but that was about all. According to a family member, Robert Frederick Congelier, the was stood for several years after the disaster and was only torn down to make way for the freeway and the redevelopment of the area.

There is an old saying that goes that "truth is stranger than fiction" and in many ways, I would say that this is the case. However, not with every story. In the tale of the House on Ridge Avenue, fiction was really much stranger than fact ever could be and truth proved to be the undoing of the haunting of "America's original most haunted house."

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As I began contacting people who should have been aware of the salient facts behind the story of the Ridge Avenue house, I realized that those who claimed knowledge were simply repeating back to me the same account that I had already heard. They cited the same sources and as far as I can tell, this "local legend" first appeared in the book *Haunted Houses* by Richard Winer and Nancy Osborn. As this had long been one of my favorite books, I was dismayed when I discovered that Mr. Winer was as fooled by the story as the rest of us were. I have been unable to discover where the authors may have first heard the story themselves.

As I continued my search, I found the same story regurgitated back to me over and over again. People who claimed to recall the details behind the events suddenly forgot them and witnesses who stated that they had information that went beyond the standard accounts became bewildered when the story did not match the historical details of the case.

All that I can say is that I hope you enjoy the recounting - and the debunking - of the legend that follows. This was not a story that I wanted to tell but as stated before, we cannot be afraid of the truth. If stories that are shown to be fraudulent are reported as real, then how can we expect the real stories to be taken seriously?

THE LEGEND: PART 1

According to the stories, the House on Ridge Avenue was located in a quiet residential neighborhood in Manchester, on the north edge of Pittsburgh. A man named Charles Wright Congelier built it in the 1860's. He had made a fortune for himself in Texas following the Civil War and such men were commonly referred to in the south as "Carpetbaggers". They made a lot of money preying on the broken economy in the former Confederacy. Congelier left Texas by river steamer, taking with him his Mexican wife, Lyda, and a servant girl named Essie. When the steamer docked in Pittsburgh for coal, Congelier decided that the Pennsylvania town looked like a good place to settle. The three of them left the ship and Congelier purchased a lot and began construction of the house.

A few months later, the new brick and mortar mansion was completed. It was located at 1129 Ridge Avenue and was considered one of the finest houses in the area. From the expansive lawn, Congelier could look out and see where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers met to form the Ohio, offering a breathtaking view. The former Carpetbagger soon became a respected member of the local business community and his new home became a frequent site for parties and social gatherings. Then, during the winter of 1871, an event took place that would bloody the location for decades to come.

That winter, as cold and snow settled over the region, Congelier became embroiled in an affair with his servant girl, Essie. Whether she was a willing participant or not, Essie soon became a constant bed partner for her employer. For several months, Lyda Congelier was unaware of the affair, but when three

people reside in the same house, it's only a matter of time before secrets are revealed.

One afternoon, when Essie did not respond to her call, Lyda went to the girl's room looking for her. As she came down the hallway, she could hear heavy breathing and moaning coming from behind the door. Knowing that her husband was the only man in the house, Lyda became enraged. She hurried to the kitchen and snatched up both a butcher knife and a meat cleaver. As she began climbing the stairs back to the servant's room, Lyda became screaming with rage, which naturally provoked a panic inside of Essie's bedroom. Before Congelier and the girl could dress themselves and exit the room, Lyda had already taken up a post outside. When the door opened, she brought the meat cleaver down on the head of the first person to open it. Charles Congelier fell to the floor, a cry on his lips and blood streaming from the wound on his head. As Essie reared back, bellowing in terror, Lyda proceeded to stab her husband thirty times.

Several days later, a family friend called at the house and when no one responded to his knock, he opened the door and peered inside. He called out, but there was no answer in the darkened house. However, as he entered the foyer, he could hear a faint creaking noise in the parlor. He called out again, but as there was no answer, he walked further into the house. Following the odd sound, he entered the parlor and saw Lyda Congelier rocking back and forth in front of a large bay window. The wooden chair that she rested in creaked with each backward and forward motion that she made.

"Lyda? Is everything all right?" he spoke to her.

There was no reply. Lyda continued to rock back and forth in the chair. As her friend drew closer, he could hear her softly crooning a lullaby under her breath. It was a child's nursery song, he realized, and he saw a bundle that was wrapped in a blanket in Lyda's arms. She held it close, as she would hold a baby, rocking it gently. The man felt a sudden chill course through him. He knew that the Congelier's had no children.

He spoke to her once again, but there was still no answer. Lyda stared straight ahead at the snow outside, her eyes glazed and unfocused. He gently leaned over and eased the bundle out of her hands. He carefully opened the pink blanket and then recoiled with horror, dropping the bloody bundle onto the floor! It landed on the wooden floorboards with a solid thud and the contents of the blanket rolled away.

The friend fell backwards on the couch as Essie's bloody head came to halt a short distance away from his feet!

For more than two decades after, the house on Ridge Avenue remained empty. Local folks considered the place "tainted" and avoided it at all costs. Few dared to even trespass on the grounds, although sometimes small children threw stones at

the windows and sang about the "old battle-ax and her meat-ax".

THE REAL STORY: PART 1

Like most legends, the story of the house is a clever blending of fact and fiction, although in this case, there is much more fancy than fact. To start with, no one named Charles Wright Congelier ever existed and neither did his wife, Lyda. There is no record of any dealings in Texas and no record of his ever living in Pittsburgh. In addition, there are no police or criminal records that state that Lyda murdered her husband and the servant girl in 1871. The use of a date here adds solidity to the story but it also makes it easier to check the validity of the tale and there is none.

Secondly, the house that is described in the story was not a mansion. There really was a house located at 1129 Ridge Avenue but it was built in the late 1880's, not in the 1860's. It was a standard Manchester row house, commonly owned by working class people of the day. It must be mentioned however that the house was later owned by members of the Congelier family, even though Charles Wright Congelier, and the murderous Lyda, were figments of a creative imagination. This is a further blending of the truth, which will be discussed later.

THE LEGEND: PART 2

In 1892, the house was renovated into an apartment building to house railroad workers. Most refused to stay in the place for long. They constantly complained of hearing screams and the sobbing of a woman that came from empty rooms. Others spoke of the ominous sounds of a rocking chair and of a woman mumbling old nursery rhymes and lullabies. Within two years, the house was abandoned once again.

It remained vacant until 1901, when Dr. Adolph C. Brunrichter purchased the house. The doctor became something of an enigma in the neighborhood. Although he had been warned of the past history of the house, he chose to purchase the place anyway and after moving in, had little to do with the nearby residents. He kept to himself and was rarely seen by those who lived close to him. Everyone in the neighborhood watched and held their breath, waiting for something terrible to happen. They didn't have to wait very long.

On August 12, 1901, the family who lived next door to the Brunrichter mansion heard a terrified scream coming from the house. When they ran outside to see what was going on, they saw a bright red flash illuminate the interior of the mansion. The windows of the house shattered and glass shot out onto the lawn. The air was filled with the smell of ozone and the earth under the neighborhood trembled, cracking the sidewalks and knocking over furniture in the surrounding homes.

By the time the police and the fire department arrived, a crowd had gathered

outside of Brunrichter's house. It was assumed that the doctor was still inside as no one had seen him leave, but none of the neighbors were brave enough to go in and check. Finally, a contingent of fire fighters entered the house in search of Brunrichter. They were unable to find him, but what they did discover was enough to send even the bravest among them running for the street outside!

In one of the upstairs bedrooms, a gut-wrenching scene awaited police investigators. Lying spread-eagled on the blood-soaked bed was the decomposed, naked body of a young woman. Her head was missing and was later found in a makeshift laboratory that the doctor had set up in another room. From what the detectives could determine, Brunrichter had apparently been experimenting with severed heads. Using electrical equipment, he had been trying to keep them alive after decapitation. A fault in his equipment had evidently caused the explosion. The young girl's head was found with several others and the graves of five women were discovered in the cellar. Each of the bodies could be matched with one of the heads from the laboratory.

As for Dr. Brunrichter, there was no sign of him. He had apparently escaped during the confusion following the explosion and had vanished. A manhunt produced no clues. He had disappeared without leaving a trace.

In September 1927, an old man was arrested in New York's Bowery district. He was found wandering in a drunken stupor, living among the homeless and the street people. He was arrested and booked for public drunkenness and was taken to the local police station house. Standing in line with the other dirty and disheveled men, this particular vagrant seemed to give off what the officers would later recall as a "bad feeling". As the drunks shuffled along, the policemen entered their names into record one at a time. When the old man reached the head of the line, the officer asked him his name.

He replied in a harsh voice, slightly slurred with a foreign accent. "My name is Adolph Brunrichter," the man said. And soon, he began to tell stories to the officers at the police station and they were tales even the most hardened officers would not soon forget.

Brunrichter began by explaining to the officers that he was once an eminent doctor, a physician who worked diligently to prolong life. Unfortunately, he could only succeed with his experiments by ending the lives of certain test subjects. He told of how many years earlier, he had bought a house in Pittsburgh to which he enticed young women as guests. Anticipating romance, the women were instead beheaded and then used in experiments to keep their severed heads alive. Brunrichter told of sex orgies, torture and murder and then gave the locations of graves for other women who were not discovered in the cellar of the house. Authorities later checked the sites, but no bodies were ever found.

Brunrichter was kept behind bars for one month at Blackwell's Island. Despite newspaper stories that called him the "Pittsburgh Spook Man", the mad doctor

was deemed "harmless" and was released. On the wall of his cell, scrawled in his own blood, were the words "What Satan hath wrought, let man beware." After those fateful words, nothing was ever heard from the man who claimed to be Dr. Adolph Brunrichter again.

THE REAL STORY: PART 2

The house was built in the late 1880's and while a working class home, was not used to house railroad workers. During this time, it was owned by Marie Congelier (who would go on to become the only recorded death associated with the house) and it was never purchased by anyone named Dr. Adolph Brunrichter. Like Charles and Lyda Congelier, he never actually existed. The only mention of Brunrichter that I have ever been able to find in my own extensive files and books about American crime is in connection to this house. This seemed rather odd to me since his crimes would have obviously have been gruesome and lurid enough to garner the attention of reporters and crime writers. However, there are no listings for him in any books that I could find.

Not content to let it go at that, I also contacted several noted crime researchers and asked them to check their own files for mentions or records of Brunrichter. None of them could find anything. Another check of newspaper and library archives for New York, where papers had allegedly written of the "Pittsburgh Spook Man" also failed to reveal any listings. The same problem occurred while trying to search for reports of the crimes in Pittsburgh as well. There is no mention of the "explosion" or the discovery of the bodies in the house in the Pittsburgh newspapers. In addition, there is not a single death record, real estate record or police record involving anyone named Brunrichter in connection with the house on Ridge Avenue. The mysterious Dr. Brunrichter vanished without a trace because he never really existed in the first place!

THE LEGEND: PART 3

After the horrific discoveries in the basement of the house, the Ridge Avenue mansion was abandoned. It stood empty again for many years, gaining an even more fearsome reputation. Those with an interest in psychic phenomena made occasional visits to the place and it came to be believed that the house was inhabited by a "fearsome presence". One medium who probed the house, Julia Murray, detected a horrible spirit there and witnesses who accompanied her to the mansion stated that "objects hurled by unseen hands barely missed striking her". Murray predicted that the entity would kill and would eventually extend out beyond the confines of the house.

In 1920, the stories about the mansion caught the attention of another man, one of the greatest inventors that America has ever known. His name was Thomas Alva Edison and in addition to creating the light bulb, he went to his grave in search of a device that would be able to communicate with the dead.

Edison was a self-taught genius who began experimenting with scientific theories as a child. Throughout his life, he maintained that it was possible to build anything if the right components were available. This would later include the already mentioned machine. Edison was not a believer in the supernatural however, nor a proponent of the popular Spiritualist movement. He had always been an agnostic and although he did not dispute the philosophies of religion, he didn't necessarily believe in their truth either. He believed that when a person died, the body decayed but the intelligence the man possessed lived on. He thought that the so-called "spirit world" was simply a limbo where disembodied intelligence waited to move on. He took these paranormal theories one step further by announcing that he intended to devise a machine that could communicate with this "limbo".. Edison's announcement appeared in newspapers after his visit to the house on Ridge Avenue. What happened during his visit to the house is unknown, but whatever it was, it certainly inspired him to go to great lengths to create the machine.

According to journals and papers, Edison began working on the apparatus. The famous magician and friend of Edison's, Joseph Dunninger, claimed that he was shown a prototype of the machine but few others ever say they saw it. Edison reportedly continued working on the machine until his death in October 1931. Did Edison's machine actually exist? And if so, would it have worked? In the years following his death, curators at both of the Edison museums in Florida and New Jersey have searched extensively for the components, the prototype or even the plans for the machine to communicate with the dead. So far, they have found nothing, making Edison's device the greatest mystery of his complex and intriguing life.

THE REAL STORY: PART 3

In the best hoaxes, fact and fiction is blended using real dates and real people to create a convincing story. In the case of the House on Ridge Avenue, the names of people like Julia Murray and Thomas Edison have been used to make the story seem more real.

Edison, on the other hand, was very real but there is absolutely no record to say that he ever set foot in the house on Ridge Avenue. If he had, he would not have found an empty "haunted" house but the home of Marie Congelier and her family would certainly have a memory of a visit by the famous inventor. According to Mrs. Congelier's descendants, no such visit ever took place.

THE LEGEND: PART 4

In the middle 1920's, Julia Murray's premonitions of "evil" connected to the house on Ridge Avenue remained in the back of many minds. During this period, the Equitable Gas Company, which was located just a few blocks away, was nearing the completion of a huge natural gas storage complex. To cut costs, many of the regular workers were laid off and were replaced by Italian immigrants, who would

work for a much lower wage. A number of vacant buildings in the neighborhood were converted into apartments, including the house at 1129 Ridge Avenue.

The Italian workers who took up residence in the house quickly realized that something was not right in the old mansion. Their complaints and reports were met with quick explanations from the supervisors at the gas company. They told the immigrants that the strange occurrences were the work of the American workers who had been replaced. The former employees were playing tricks on the new workers, hoping they would abandon their jobs. The men soon dismissed the strange sounds and ghostly footsteps as practical jokes until an incident occurred a few months after they moved in.

One evening, 14 men were seated around the table in the common dining room. They had just finished consuming large quantities of pasta and were now laughing and talking over glasses of homemade wine. One of the men got up and carried a stack of dirty dishes into the kitchen. He joked to his brother as he left the room, calling out a humorous insult over his shoulder with a smile. The remark was answered with laughter and his brother tossed a crust of bread at his sibling's retreating back. The conversation continued for several minutes before the remaining man realized that his brother had not returned from the kitchen. He got up and walked into the other room to find the door to the basement standing open.

Suddenly, the festive mood in the dining room was shattered by a chilling scream! Rushing into the kitchen, the men saw the basement door as it yawned open. Taking a lantern from atop the icebox, several of the men descended the steps into the cellar. Before they reached the bottom of the steps, they froze, staring at the macabre scene that was illuminated by the glow of the lantern. In the dim light, they saw the man who had left the dining room just moments earlier, now hanging from a floor beam that crossed the ceiling above!

On the floor, directly beneath his feet, was the man's brother. He was lying face down in a spreading pool of blood. A splintered board had been driven through his chest and now exited out through his back.

The leader of the group on the steps crossed himself religiously and a gasp escaped from his lips. His friends repeated the gesture before all of them found themselves slammed backward by a force that they could not see! The feeling of a cold wind pushed against them and then rushed past up the stairs. The men later said that they could hear the pounding of footsteps on the wooden treads, but could see nothing at all. The door at the top of the stairs slammed shut, startling the men in the kitchen, who didn't hear anything. However, they did report other doors mysteriously slamming throughout the house.

When the police arrived, they attributed both deaths to a bizarre accident. The first man, the detectives stated, tripped on a loose step and fell down, impaling himself on the propped-up board. The other brother's death was the result of the same loose stair step. When he fell though, his head was somehow tangled on an

electric wire that was hanging down above the staircase. Accident or not, the other men quickly moved out of the house, wanting nothing more to do with the place.

THE REAL STORY: PART 4

Once again, real-life events blend into the story to make it more compelling. In the 1920's, the nearby Equitable Gas Company did lay off many of their workers and replaced them with Italian immigrants. As many of the houses in the neighborhood were worker's homes anyway, several of them were converted into housing for the replacement employees. However, there were no records of any accidental deaths taking place at 1129 Ridge Avenue, associated with these workers. One accident did take place however, on the same day that another accident destroyed a gas storage tank nearby.

On the morning of the explosion, November 14, Marie Congelier died from a laceration caused by a piece of glass. The glass had severed her artery and she bled to death on the way to the hospital. She did not die in the house but her death came about because of it --- with nothing supernatural involved. She would become the only death that can truly be connected to the House on Ridge Avenue.

THE LEGEND: PART 5

On Monday, November 14, 1927, a crew of sixteen workers climbed to the top of the Equitable Gas Company's huge, 5,000,000-cubic-foot natural gas storage tank to find and repair a leak.

At 8:43 that morning, a great sheet of flame erupted from the tank and the huge container shot impossibly upwards into the air. Steel, stone and human bodies were sent hurling into the sky. Two of the men who had been working on top of the tank were thrown against a brick building more than one hundred feet away and their silhouettes were outlined there in blood. Seconds later, another tank exploded, creating another gigantic ball of fire. Then a third tank, this one only partially full, was wrenched apart and added to the inferno. Smoke and flames were visible for miles. The force was so awesome that it blew out windows and shook buildings for a twenty-mile radius. Locomotives were knocked over and homes and structures damaged as far away as East Liberty.

Across the street, the Union Paint Company was flattened and dozens of workers were buried under the rubble of the building. Bloody men, women and children ran frantically about in the streets.

The Battalion Chief of Engine Company No. 47, Dan Jones, was part of the first fire unit to arrive on the scene. He described the holocaust saying "great waves of black smoke swept through the streets and there was a whining noise in the air." According to a book compiled by the Writer's Project of America, the destruction

Saturday, February 20, 2016

The Kiss of Death.



Frank Sharon, a young barber in Fall River, Massachusetts had some difficulty with his wife in December 1881, which resulted in his arrest. After his release, he went home and entered the room where his wife, and mother of his three children, lay sleeping. He leaned over and kissed her three times, then drew a pistol and shot her in the side of her neck. She died almost instantly.

Sharon went straight downtown and turned himself in to the police. He said something crossed his mind and told him to kill his wife. At his arraignment in January, Sharon pled not guilty to the charge of murder. He was probably planning to plead insanity, but it does not appear that the case ever went to trial.

Sources:

"Brutal Case of Wife Murder." *Philadelphia Inquirer* 8 Dec 1881.

"Kiss of Death." *National Police Gazette* 24 Dec 1881.

"Local Intelligence." *Springfield Republican* 23 Jan 1882.

Posted by Robert Wilhelm

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The PUBLIC DOMAIN *REVIEW*

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

The Krakatoa Sunsets

When a volcano erupted on a small island in Indonesia in 1883, the evening skies of the world glowed for months with strange colours. Richard Hamblyn explores a little-known series of letters that the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins sent in to the journal *Nature* describing the phenomenon – letters that would constitute the majority of the small handful of writings published while he was alive.



Lithograph from 1888 showing the Krakatoa eruption, author unknown.

During the winter of 1883 the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins descended into one of his periodic depressions, “a wretched state of weakness and weariness, I can’t tell why,” he wrote, “always drowsy and incapable of reading or thinking to any effect.” It was partly boredom: Hopkins was ungainfully employed at a Catholic boarding school in Lancashire, where much of his time was spent steering his pupils through their university entrance exams. The thought that he was wasting his time and talents weighed heavily upon him during the long, brooding walks he took through the “sweet landscape” of Ribblesdale, “thy lovely dale”, as he described it in one of the handful of poems he managed to compose that winter. He was about to turn forty and felt trapped.

Such was his state of mind when the Krakatoa sunsets began.

The tiny volcanic island of Krakatoa (located halfway between Java and Sumatra) had staged a spectacular eruption at the end of August 1883, jettisoning billions of tonnes of ash and debris deep into the earth’s upper atmosphere. Nearly 40,000 people had been killed by a series of mountainous waves thrown out by the force of the explosion: the Javan port of Anjer had been almost completely destroyed, along with more than a hundred coastal towns and villages. “All gone. Plenty lives lost”, as a telegram sent from Serang reported, and for weeks afterwards the bodies of the drowned continued to wash up along the shoreline. Meanwhile, the vast volcanic ash-cloud had spread into a semi-opaque band that threaded slowly westward around the equator, forming memorable sunsets and afterglows across the earth’s lower latitudes. A few weeks later, the stratospheric veil moved outwards from the tropics to the poles, and by late October 1883 most of the world, including Britain, was being subjected to lurid evening displays, caused by the scattering of incoming light by the meandering volcanic haze. Throughout November and December, the skies flared through virulent shades of green, blue, copper and magenta, “more like inflamed flesh than the lucid reds of ordinary sunsets,” wrote Hopkins; “the glow is intense; that is what strikes everyone; it has prolonged the daylight, and optically changed the season; it bathes the whole sky, it is mistaken for the

reflection of a great fire.”



Gerard Manley Hopkins in 1866, detail from a photo by Thomas C. Bayfield. National Portrait Gallery

In common with most other observers at the time, Hopkins had no idea what was causing the phenomenon, but he grew fascinated by the daily atmospheric displays, tracking their changing appearances over the course of that unsettled winter. At the end of December he collated his observations into a remarkable 2,000-word document, which he sent to the leading science journal, *Nature*. The article, published in January 1884, was a masterpiece of reportage, a heightened prose poem that mixed rhapsodic literary experimentation with a high degree of meteorological rigour:

Above the green in turn appeared a red glow, broader and burlier in make; it was softly brindled, and in the ribs or bars the colour was rosier, in the channels where the blue of the sky shone through it was a mallow colour. Above this was a vague lilac. The red was first noticed 45° above the horizon, and spokes or beams could be seen in it, compared by one beholder to a man's open hand. By 4.45 the red had driven out the green, and, fusing with the remains of the orange, reached the horizon. By that time the east, which had a rose tinge, became of a duller red, compared to sand; according to my observation, the ground of the sky in the east was green or else tawny, and the crimson only in the clouds. A great sheet of heavy dark cloud, with a reefed or puckered make, drew off the west in the course of the pageant: the edge of this and the smaller pellets of cloud that filed across the bright field of the sundown caught a livid green. At 5 the red in the west was fainter, at 5.20 it became notably rosier and livelier; but it was never of a pure rose. A faint dusky blush was left as late as 5.30, or later. While these changes were going on in the sky, the landscape of Ribblesdale glowed with a frowning brown. (from G. M. Hopkins, "The Remarkable Sunsets", *Nature* 29 (3 January 1884), pp. 222-23)

Hopkins was a gifted empirical observer with a near-forensic interest in the search for written equivalents to the complexity of the natural world. Such interest in the language of precision was shared by many scientists at the time, science, like poetry, being an inherently descriptive enterprise. Anyone who reads the official Royal Society report on the Krakatoa sunsets (published in 1888) will find flights of poetic prose to rival those of Hopkins, who described such language as "the current language heightened and unlike itself," a dynamic written form that was particularly suited to the expression of what he called "inscape": the distinctive unity of all natural phenomena that gives everything in nature its characterising beauty and uniqueness. The force of being that holds these dynamic identities together he termed "instress", instress being the essential energy that enables an observer to recognise the inscape of another being. These post-Romantic notions formed a kind of personal poetic creed, a logocentric natural theology that was rooted in the work of Duns Scotus, the medieval Christian philosopher.



Photograph taken in 1928 of the destroyed Krakatoa island resurfacing, forming what is known now as 'Anak Krakatau', or 'Child of Krakatoa'. Tropenmuseum of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT).

For Hopkins, inscape and instress lay at the heart of his religious and poetic practice, as well as being vital means of apprehending the natural world. In a journal entry for 22 April 1871, for instance, he records “such a lovely damasking in the sky as today I never felt before. The blue was charged with simple instress, the higher, zenith sky earnest and frowning, lower more light and sweet.” Note that he felt the damasking as well as saw it, and note, too, his calibrated descriptions of the banded blues of the sky, the higher “earnest and frowning”, the lower “more light and sweet.” His journals are full of such poetic quantifications, which he used as notes towards a quintet of articles that he published in the journal *Nature*, all on meteorological subjects. The first two, published in November 1882 and November 1883, were letters describing anti-crepuscular rays (cloud-

shadows that appear in the evening sky opposite the sun), while the following three were all on the subject of the Krakatoa sunsets, which had evidently furnished the melancholy Hopkins with a much-needed source of distraction.

He was not alone in his interest; all over the world, writers, artists and scientists responded to the drama of the volcanic skies. The poets Algernon Swinburne, Robert Bridges and Alfred Tennyson (then poet laureate), wrote lengthy descriptive strophes prompted by the unearthly twilights, although, as the historian Richard Altick pointed out, “the only good poetry that resulted from the celestial displays is found in Hopkins’ prose” (Richard D. Altick, “Four Victorian Poets and an Exploding Island”, *Victorian Studies* 3 (March 1960), p. 258). This is a fair assessment, though I do have a sneaking fondness for Tennyson’s blank-verse approximation of the cadences of Victorian popular science:

Had the fierce ashes of some fiery peak
 Been hurl’d so high they ranged about the globe?
 For day by day, thro’ many a blood-red eve . . .
 The wrathful sunset glared . . . (“St. Telemachus”, pub. 1892)

Visual artists also found themselves extending their colour ranges in awed emulation of the skies. Painter William Ascroft spent many evenings making pastel sky-sketches from the banks of the Thames at Chelsea, noting his frustration that he “could only secure in a kind of chromatic shorthand the heart of the effect, as so much of the beauty of afterglow consisted in concentration.” He exhibited more than five hundred of these highly-coloured pastels in the galleries of the Science Museum, in the repository of which they remain to this day, little known and rarely seen.

In Oslo, by contrast, the sunsets helped inspire one of the world’s best-known paintings: Edvard Munch was walking with some friends one evening as the sun descended through the haze: “it was as if a flaming sword of blood slashed open the vault of heaven,” he recalled;



Lithograph from 1888 showing the Krakatoa eruption, author unknown. Gerard Manley Hopkins in 1866, detail from a photo by Thomas C. Bayfield. National Portrait Gallery Photograph taken in 1928 of the destroyed Krakatoa island resurfacing, forming what is known now as 'Anak Krakatau', or 'Child of Krakatoa'. Tropenmuseum of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT). Three of the hundreds of sketches carried out by William Ascroft in the winter of 1883/4 - used as the frontispiece of *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society (1888)*, ed. by G.J. Simmons. Three of the hundreds of sketches carried out by William Ascroft in the winter of 1883/4 - used as the frontispiece of *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society (1888)*, ed. by G.J. Simmons.



Lithograph from 1888 showing the Krakatoa eruption, author unknown. Gerard Manley Hopkins in 1866, detail from a photo by Thomas C. Bayfield. National Portrait Gallery Photograph taken in 1928 of the destroyed Krakatoa island resurfacing, forming what is known now as 'Anak Krakatau', or 'Child of Krakatoa'. Tropenmuseum of the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT). Three of the hundreds of sketches carried out by William Ascroft in the winter of 1883/4 - used as the frontispiece of *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society (1888)*, ed. by G.J. Simmons. Three of the hundreds of sketches carried out by William Ascroft in the winter of 1883/4 - used as the frontispiece of *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society (1888)*, ed. by G.J. Simmons.

“the atmosphere turned to blood – with glaring tongues of fire – the hills became deep blue – the fjord shaded into cold blue – among the yellow and red colours – that garish blood-red – on the road – and the railing – my companions’ faces became yellow-white – I felt something like a great scream – and truly I heard a great scream.” His painting *The Scream* (1893), of which he made several versions, is an enduring (and much stolen) expressionist masterpiece, a vision of human desolation writhing beneath an apocalyptic sky, as “a great unending scream pierces through nature.” As it happens, the final eruption of Krakatoa on 27 August 1883 was the loudest sound ever recorded, travelling almost 5,000 km, and heard over nearly a tenth of the earth’s surface: a great scream indeed.

As for Hopkins, the publication of his Krakatoa essay coincided with the welcome offer of a professorship in classics at University College Dublin. He left Lancashire for Ireland in February 1884, relieved to have made his escape. It didn’t last. Homesick, lonely and overworked, Hopkins succumbed to his worst depression yet, his misery traced in the so-called “terrible” sonnets of 1885 (“I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day”). He died of typhoid fever in June 1889 (aged



Three of the hundreds of sketches carried out by William Ascroft in the winter of 1883/4 - used as the frontispiece of *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society* (1888), ed. by G.J. Simmons.

44), and was buried in an unmarked grave. Only his close friend Robert Bridges was aware of his greatness as a poet, and the bulk of his work remained unpublished until 1918. In fact, apart from a handful of minor poems that had appeared in obscure periodicals, the five *Nature* articles were

the only works that Hopkins published in his lifetime.

Richard Hamblyn's books include *The Invention of Clouds*

, which won the 2002 *Los Angeles Times Book Prize* and was shortlisted for the *Samuel Johnson Prize*; *Terra: Tales of the Earth* (2009), a study of natural disasters; and *The Art of Science* (2011), an anthology of readable science writing from the Babylonians to the Higgs Boson. He is a lecturer in creative writing at Birkbeck, University of London.

Links to Works

- Letters by Gerard Manley Hopkins in *Nature*, Vol XXIX, November 1883 to April 1884.
 - "The Remarkable Sunsets", p.222-3, Jan 3rd 1884
 - "Shadow-Beams in the East at Sunset", p.55, Nov 17th 1883
 - "Green Sun", p.7, Nov 1st 1883
- Letter by Gerard Manley Hopkins in *Nature*, Vol XXVII, November 1882 to April 1883.
 - "A Curious Halo", p.55, Nov 16th 1882
- *The Eruption of Krakatoa, and Subsequent Phenomena: Report of the Krakatoa committee of the Royal Society* (1888), Ed. by G.J. Simmons.
 - Internet Archive link

Recommended Readings

- *The Art of Science: A Natural History of Ideas* (2011), by Richard Hamblyn.
- *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Victorian Visual World* (2008), by Catherine Phillips.

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The Leaping Saint: 29th February in the Middle Ages - Medieval manuscripts blog

typepad.co.uk


Medieval manuscripts blog

29 February 2016

The Leaping Saint: 29th February in the Middle Ages



Calendar crop

A close up of a volvelle, or wheel-chart, Harley MS 3719, f. 156r

Today is a Leap Day.
People born

on this day are known as 'leaplings'. This bonus day only comes around every four years to accommodate the fact that the solar year is a pesky 365.2422 days long. Throughout human history there have been a number of attempts to knit the solar year to the calendar, with varying degrees of success. Adding an extra day to the end of February is, actually, a comparatively recent innovation.

The ancient Egyptians had a whole leap-month, called the intercalary or epagomal month, which consisted of either five or six days, that was added to the end of the year. It still survives in the liturgical calendar of Egyptian (Coptic) Christians.

The Romans used this method until 46 BCE, when Julius Caesar set about reforming the calendar. Caesar got rid of the leap-month and came up with the idea of adding an extra day in February every four years. The addition, however, was inserted not at the end of the month, as in our calendars, but by repeating 24th February (the sixth day before the start of March - as the Romans termed it). Caesar's practice, together with his reformed calendar, now known as the Julian calendar (after the emperor himself), was later adopted in both Western (Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity. The leap day is still called "double-sixth-day", in French (*dissextile*), Italian (*bisestile*) or even in Greek (*disektos*).

This doubling of 24th February, together with all the consequences it brought about, is accurately explained in a lavishly illuminated collection of ecclesiastical laws from the fourteenth century

The Smithfield Decretals, Southern France, c.1300-1340, Royal MS 10 E IV, f. 309r.

A close up of the gloss by Bernard of Botone (d. 1266). The text reads:



Royal_ms_10_e_iv_f309r



Leap crop 3

A standard solar year has 365 days and six hours, so in four years' time these hours make 24 extra hours, which must be added as a new day to every fourth year. This additional day is what we call "double-sixth-day", because, although it is counted as an addition, it stands under the same number as the previous day in the calendar, so that the two days are regarded as one and the same. The extra day is inserted in the calendar after 24 February (six days before the first day of March) so that we celebrate the memory of St Matthias the Apostle (24 February) on the next day, too.

In 1582, calendrical reform came from Rome again, this time, from Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585). Gregory realised that because a whole day was added to every fourth year, when in fact it should be a bit less than a day to be accurate, the Julian calendar was 11 days ahead: 15th October in Gregory's time was, astronomically, 4th October. In order to cut out this accumulated surplus, he issued a Papal directive stating that 4th October in 1582 will be followed by 15th October and the first year of each century will not be a leap year any more, except if it is divisible by 400. So what about the leaping saint? Well, the medieval solution for the leap-year problem was generous. By doubling 24th February the following saints' feast days could all keep their original date and – because there were two 24ths in the month – February remained 28 days long. In this way, no saint suffered the ignominy of having their feast day celebrated only one year in every four. Instead, there was a gain: in the leap year Saint Matthias was celebrated twice – on the 24th(a) and 24th(b) alike.

Yet curiously, in this overhaul the repeated 24th remained in place. It was only over time that the medieval system of two 24ths was phased out and replaced by a 29th day of the month, but the tradition of having an extra 24th with its leaping saint, the Apostle Matthias, is still preserved in the Catholic liturgy.

Page from a fifteenth-century breviary, with instructions on how to celebrate the Evangelist Matthias in a leap year, The Breviary of Isabel the Castile, Southern Netherlands, c. 1497, Add MS 18851,

f. 347r



Leap crop 2

Happy Leap Day!

~ Peter Toth & Mary Wellesley

Posted by Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Manuscripts at
12:02 AM

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The Hidden History of LA: the mayor who helped lynch a man

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The Hidden History of LA: The mayor who helped lynch a man

by Robert Petersen | Off-Ramp February 24 2016



119653 full

LA Mayor Stephen Clark Foster Wikipedia Commons

In Los Angeles City Hall on any given day, Mayor Eric Garcetti, might be inside working on his agenda for the city. But on that very site, 160 years ago, another L.A. mayor was working on a distinctly different effort.

Stephen Clark Foster was elected in 1854 and is often referred to as the first "American" mayor of L.A. Because right after Americans seized California from Mexico, the state was placed under military rule, and Foster was appointed *alcalde*, or mayor, to replace the dissolved Mexican government. After serving as *alcalde*, Foster served as a city councilperson and state senator before being formally elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1854.

In the 1850s, L.A. was small and lawless. When a man named David Brown killed one of his friends, a vigilance committee formed to lynch Brown. But before the mob could act, Mayor Foster intervened and argued that the courts should be given a chance to administer justice. He promised that if Brown got off, he would resign his office as mayor and lead the lynching party himself.

And — as Robert Petersen tells the story in his Hidden History of LA podcast — that's exactly what happened. Foster was not only re-elected, but also went on to serve as L.A. County Supervisor. Listen to the audio for the whole story, and learn more of LA's Hidden History.

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The Medieval Walking Dead - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

October 20, 2013 By Medievalists.net

On January 1, 1091, an army of the dead came to Normandy. For one priest, it would be a night that he would never forget.



medieval dead

The medieval world believed in ghosts and spirits – there are countless stories from the Middle Ages how people were visited by the dead. While people would naturally be frightened if they came across a ghost, rarely would the ghost itself come to haunt or torment the living. Instead they often appeared to those people that they knew while they were alive, and usually wanted something from them.

The concept of purgatory was fully realized in the medieval period – that when a person dies their soul doesn't automatically go to Heaven or Hell. The Roman Catholic doctrine believed that even if the soul was not condemned to Hell, it still needed to be purified before entering Paradise. This would be Purgatory, where the souls would get tortured and punished for their sins.

The living world could help the dead in getting out of Purgatory – mainly by praying for their souls. By the late Middle Ages it was a popular practice for people to leave money in their wills to hire priests that would perform Mass for their souls.



medieval purgatory

Many of the ghost stories from the Middle Ages involve souls that were in Purgatory, but contacted their living relatives to ask for them to do something that would help relieve their suffering and assist them in entering Heaven. These could range from paying a debt, fulfilling a vow, or just making sure they were being prayed for.

One of the strangest stories to be written down in the Middle Ages comes from the pen of Orderic Vitalis, a twelfth-century monk. From the abbey of Saint Evroult in Normandy, Orderic wrote his *Ecclesiastical History*, offering one of the best accounts of the Anglo-Norman world up the year 1141. Orderic wrote about the reigns of the kings William I to Stephen, the political events that happened locally and abroad, and even about the news coming

from his own monastery.

At one point in Book Eight of his *Ecclesiastical History*, Orderic pauses from discussing the warfare between William Rufus and his rebellious count Robert of Belleme, and states, "I am sure that I should not pass over in silence or consign to oblivion something that happened to a priest in the diocese of Lisieux on January 1st." Orderic explains that the priest was named Walchelin, and "he was a young man, strong and brave, well-built and active." On the night of January 1, 1091, he was returning home after a visiting a sick man at the far end of his parish. He was travelling along the road, far from from any homes, when he heard the sounds of a great army coming towards him.

Walchelin believed that these were the soldiers of Robert of Belleme, and he decided it would be best for him to hide behind the trees and let the army pass by. Orderic relates what happened next:

But a man of huge stature, carrying a great mace, barred the priest's way as he ran and, brandishing the weapon over his head, cried out, 'Stand; go no further.' The priest obeyed at once and stood motionless, leaning on the staff he was carrying. The stern mace-bearer stood beside him without harming him, waiting for the army to pass by.

Walchelin stayed at the side of the road as he watched thousands of people walk by. First came the peasants, who were carrying across their necks and shoulders their clothes, animals, furniture and other worldly goods. To the priest they seemed to be a mob of people who were carrying off the plunder from an attack.

Then came hundreds of women, riding side-saddle on horses, but the saddles were marked with red hot nails. As the women rode, they would jump off their saddles and into the air, and then land back on the nails, leaving them burned and stabbed. After them came a crowd of priests, monks, even bishops and abbots, all dressed in black cowls and groaning and lamenting as they passed by. "Next followed a great army of knights in, which no colour was visible save blackness and flickering fire. All rode upon huge horses, fully armed as if they were galloping to battle and carrying jet-black standards."

What scared Walchelin so much was that he recognized many of these people – they were his neighbours and fellow clergy, but they had all died in recent years. There were even people that Walchelin and others thought to be good Christians, even considered saints. But they were here too, walking with this army of the dead.

The worst of this group were those being carried on biers, suffering terrible punishments:

On the biers sat men as small as dwarfs, but with huge heads like barrels. One enormous tree-trunk was borne by two Ethiopians, and on the trunk some wretch, tightly trussed, was suffering tortures, screaming aloud in his dreadful agony. A fearful demon sitting on the same

trunk was mercilessly goading his back and loins with red-hot spurs while he streamed with blood. Walchelin at once recognized him as the slayer of the priest Stephen, and realized that he was suffering unbearable torments for his guilt in shedding innocent blood not two years earlier, for he had died without completing his penance for the terrible crime.

As Walchelin watched them pass by he realized this was Hellequin's Army, which apparently had been a folktale for many years (although Orderic Vitalis is our earliest writer to talk about them). Throughout the twelfth-century this legend would spread around around Western Europe. Walter Map (1140-c.1210) explained that they got their name from ancient Briton king named Herla, who made a deal with a Dwarf king. The dwarf gives him a small dog, and tells Herla and his companions that they cannot dismount from their horses until the dog jumps off of Herla's arms, otherwise they will be all turned to dust. Herla soon realizes the dog will not leave his arms, and so he and his companions are doomed to wander the Earth as a kind of undead.

There are several tales about Hellequin's Army, or Hellequin's Hunt, some of which involve King Arthur or other medieval legends. Church writers apparently associated this ghostly ramble with Purgatory, offering a horrific example to the living on what awaits those who sinned when they died.

As Walchelin continued to watch the medieval horde pass before his eyes, he said to himself, "I have heard many who claimed to have seen them, but have ridiculed the tale-tellers and not believed them because I never saw any solid proof of such things. Now I do indeed see the shades of the dead with my own eyes, but no one will believe me when I describe my vision unless I can show some token to living men. I will catch one of the riderless horses following the host, quickly mount it and take it home, to compel the belief of my neighbours when I show it to them."

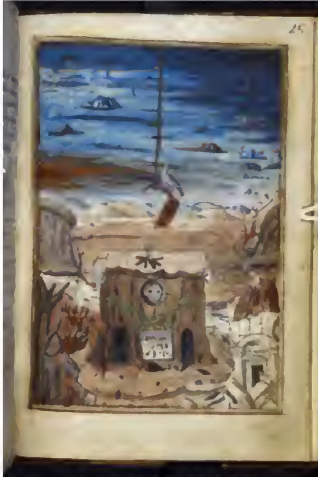
He tried to grab the first riderless horse he saw, but it bolted away before Walchelin could reach it. Another steed came along:

The horse stopped for the priest to mount, breathing from its nostrils a great cloud of steam in the shape of a tall oak-tree. The priest put his left foot in the stirrup and, seizing the reins, placed his hand on the saddle; immediately he felt an intense burning like raging fire under his foot; and an indescribable cold struck into his heart from the hand that held the reins.

Just then four of the dead knights rushed towards them,
shouting "Why are you molesting our horses? Come with us. None
of our people has harmed you, yet you try to take what is ours."

Walchelin was very frightened, but one of the knights told the others not to harm the priest. He identified himself as William of Glos, and he spoke about how his sins in life were punishing him in his death:

"But most of all usury torments me. For I lent my money to a poor man, receiving a mill of his as a pledge, and because he was unable to repay the loan I retained the pledge all my life and disinherited the legitimate heir by leaving it to my heirs. See, I carry a burning mill-shaft in



Arundel 317, f.25

my mouth which, believe me, seems heavier than the castle of Rouen. Therefore tell my wife Beatrice and my son Roger that they must help me by quickly restoring to the heir the pledge, from which they have received far more than I ever gave."

As Walchelin heard more about this knight's sins and his demands, he decided not to help him:

"It is not right to declare such things. In no circumstances will I carry your orders out to anyone." The knight in a terrible rage then put on his hand and seized the priest by the throat, dragging him along the ground and threatening him. His victim felt the hand that held him burning like fire, and in his great anguish cried out suddenly, 'Blessed Mary, glorious Mother of Christ, help me!'"

Just then another knight appeared, waving a sword in his right hand and saying "Wretches, why are you murdering my brother? Leave him and be gone."

This new knight came to Walchelin and revealed himself to be his brother Robert, who died in England. But Walchelin did not recognize him, or believe him, even after Robert revealed things that only his brother would know. Finally the dead knight exclaimed: "I am amazed by your hardness and obstinacy. I brought you up after both our parents died, and loved you more than any living person. I sent you to schools in France, kept you well-provided with clothes and money, and in many other ways furthered your progress. Now you have forgotten all this and disdain even to recognize me."

It was only then that Walchelin believed him, and the two brothers talked for a while. Robert explained:

"After I last spoke to you in Normandy I left for England with your blessing; there I reached my life's end when my Creator willed, and I have endured severe punishment for the great sins with which I am heavily burdened. The arms which we bear are red-hot, and offend us with an appalling stench, weighing us down with intolerable weight, and burning with everlasting fire. Up to now I have suffered unspeakable torture from these punishments. But when you were ordained in England and sang your first Mass for the faithful departed your father Ralph escaped from his punishments and my shield, which caused me great pain, fell from me. As you see I still carry this sword, but I look in faith for release from this burden within the year."

Finally, as the last of Hellequin's Army went by, Robert said, "I cannot speak longer with you, my brother, for I am compelled to hasten after this wretched host. Remember me, I beg: help me with your prayers and compassionate alms. In one year from Palm Sunday I hope to be saved and released from all torments by the mercy of my Creator. Take thought for your own welfare: correct your life wisely, for it is stained by many vices, and you must know that it will not be long enduring."

Once the ghostly army had gone, Walchelin fell ill for a week, but he slowly recovered and told the local bishop of what he saw. Orderic Vitalis reveals that he himself had heard this

story from Walchelin himself, and even saw the scar on his face caused by the evil knight. Walchelin would live for at least another fifteen years.

Orderic sums up this event by writing, "I have recorded these things for the edification of my readers, so the just men may be encouraged in good, and the vicious may repent of evil."

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Filed Under: Features Tagged With: Anglo-Norman, Eleventh Century, Folk Studies, Normandy, Orderic Vitalis, Twelfth Century

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The gruesome and mysterious case of exploding teeth

By Thomas Morris 2 March 2016

bbc.com



The gruesome and mysterious case of exploding teeth

Following months of agonising toothache, 19th Century patients sometimes found their teeth shattering in their mouths – with a force that nearly knocked one woman over.

In the 19th Century, a Pennsylvania dentist called WH Atkinson came across a condition that sounds like the stuff of nightmares. Writing in *The Dental Cosmos*, the first major journal for American dentists, Atkinson documented an outbreak of exploding teeth.

He saw it in three patients. The first, the Reverend DA from Springfield, went through this unpleasant ordeal in 1817:

The right superior canine or first bicuspid commenced aching, increasing in intensity to such a degree as to set him wild. During his agonies he ran about here and there, in the vain endeavor to obtain some respite; at one time boring his head on the ground like an enraged animal, at another poking it under the corner of the fence, and again going to the spring and plunging his head to the bottom in the cold water.

Not terribly dignified behaviour for a clergyman, which gives you some idea of how much pain he must have been in. Toothache could be sheer torture in the era before cheap and effective dentistry: an inquest in Sussex in 1862 heard how a man took his own life after a toothache lasting five months, “during which time he was observed to cry, day by day, for hours together”. The unfortunate priest had a happier outcome:

All at once a sharp crack, like a pistol shot, burst his tooth to fragments, giving him instant relief

All proved unavailing, till, at 9:00 the next morning, as he was walking the floor in wild delirium, all at once a sharp crack, like a pistol shot, bursting his tooth to fragments, gave him instant relief. At this moment he turned to his wife, and said, “My pain is all gone.” He went to bed, and slept soundly all that day and most of the succeeding night; after which he was rational and well.



(Credit: Alamy)

Thirteen years after this distressing incident, something similar happened to a patient known as a Mrs Letitia D, who lived only a few miles away. She suffered a prolonged toothache, “terminating by bursting with report, giving immediate relief”.

The final case in this trio of dental disasters occurred in 1855. Mrs Anna PA reported that one of her canines split from front to back:

A sudden, sharp report, and instant relief, as in the other

cases, occurred in the left superior canine. She is living and healthy, the mother of a family of fine girls.

Although unusual, these stories are not unique. The editors at the British Dental Journal recently highlighted a lively correspondence from its archives, originally printed in 1965, detailing many other tales of detonating dentine throughout history.

The molar burst with a concussion and report that well-nigh knocked her over

They included a case recorded in 1871 by another American dentist, J Phelps Hibler. He treated a young woman whose toothache ended spectacularly when the tooth, a molar, “burst with a concussion and report, that well-nigh knocked her over”. The explosion was so loud that she was deafened for some days afterwards.

Although there were five or six reported cases in the 19th Century, there has been no documented case of exploding teeth since the 1920s. Hugh Devlin at the University of Manchester’s School of Dentistry, says that although it is fairly common for diseased teeth to split, he’s never heard of one going bang. He recalls that Antarctic explorers in the 1960s reported their teeth shattering spontaneously, thought at the time to have been the result of extreme cold – but he believes the real culprit was caries (tooth decay) caused by their high-sugar diet.

So what caused these dramatic dental explosions? In his 1860 article Atkinson offered two alternative explanations. The first was that a substance which he called ‘free caloric’ was building up in the tooth and causing a dramatic increase of pressure in the pulp. This hypothesis can be ruled out straight away, since it relies on an obsolete scientific theory. For many years, heat was believed to consist of a fluid called ‘caloric’, which was self-repelling – although this would make a pressure increase plausible, we now know that no such fluid exists.



(Credit: Alamy)

At first glance, Atkinson’s second idea seems more credible. He suggested that decay within the tooth might have caused a build-up of gas, which eventually made the tooth fracture.

Could this explain the mystery? Devlin is sceptical: “It is highly unlikely that gas could build up in a tooth sufficient to cause it to explode – teeth are extremely strong. The 19th Century dentists didn’t understand caries – they thought it came from within the tooth. It’s

only in the last century that we started understanding that caries is caused by diet and by bacteria building up on the surface of the teeth.”

A poorly executed filling could create an electrochemical cell – effectively, the whole mouth would be turned into a low-voltage battery

Instead, the answer may lie in the chemicals used to make early fillings. Before the advent of mercury amalgam in the 1830s a wide variety of metals were used to fill dental cavities, including lead, tin, silver and various alloys. Andrea Sella, an inorganic chemist at University College London, points out that if two different metals had been used this would create an electrochemical cell – effectively, the whole mouth would be turned into a low-voltage battery: “Because of the mixture of metals you have in the mouth, there might be spontaneous electrolysis. My favoured explanation is that if a filling were badly done so that part of the cavity remained, that would mean the possibility of build-up of hydrogen within a tooth.”

An already weakened tooth might conceivably burst under this pressure – and the hydrogen could even explode if ignited, for instance if the patient were smoking at the time or if an iron filling caused a spark in the mouth. Sella concedes that this scenario is a little far-fetched: “My feeling is that there wouldn’t be a jet of flame coming from this Victorian gentleman’s mouth.”

Unfortunately, there’s no evidence that any of the original patients actually had fillings. So either an unknown process was causing the explosions or the patients were exaggerating symptoms which were far more mundane. For now at least it seems that the “mystery of the exploding teeth” will remain unsolved.

This article was based on a post on Thomas Morris’s blog on the history of medicine, which can be found at www.thomas-morris.uk. He tweets at @thomasngmorris.

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The mystery of the miniature coffins

nms.ac.uk



The

Above: Three of the miniature coffins on display in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Arthur's Seat. Image © Saskia Heijltjes. Above: Five of the 17 coffins discovered on Arthur's Seat. Above: This calf's heart stuck with pins, on display in the National Museum of Scotland, shows evidence of sympathetic magic practices being carried out in Scotland. However, x-rays have found no evidence of pins or pinholes in the Arthur's Seat figures. Above: These Scottish charms can be seen alongside the Arthur's Seat coffins in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: By day, William Brodie was a cabinet maker, the Deacon (or leader) of the Incorporation of Wrights. This mahogany clothes press was originally thought to be made by William Brodie, though it is more likely to have been made by Francis Brodie, his father. It is currently on display in the National Museum of Scotland. Also in the collection are some invoices for work done by both Francis and William. Above: These keys and lock picks belonged to Deacon Brodie, and were used as evidence against him at his trial in 1788. They were donated to the museum in 1841 by the clerks of the Justiciary Court in Edinburgh. Above: Mortsafe from Airth, Stirlingshire, 1831, on display near the coffins in the National Museum of Scotland. Grieving relatives, desperate to protect their dead from the 'resurrectionists', would encase coffins in locked iron mortsafes for the first six weeks after burial. Those who couldn't afford the cost would set up vigil in the graveyard instead. Above: This iron collar, from Kingskettle in Fife, was bolted through the bottom of a coffin and around the neck of a corpse, to prevent it being removed by resurrectionists. c. 1820. Above: William Hare and William Burke. Above: The flamboyant lecturer and anatomist Dr Robert Knox. Although Knox was cleared of any criminal activity, his association with Burke and Hare ruined his career. Image © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Above: The replica coffins created for the TV adaption of *The Falls* (left) are bigger than the real coffins. In the novel, a serial killer places similar coffins (right) near the scenes of his crimes. Above: The replica coffins created for the TV adaption of *The Falls* (left) are bigger than the real coffins. In the novel, a serial killer places similar coffins (right) near the scenes of his crimes. Above: Coffin no. XVIII? Above: The label attached to the replica coffin. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr.

mystery of the miniature coffins

In late June 1836, a group of boys headed out to the north-east slopes of Edinburgh's Arthur's Seat to hunt for rabbits. What they found there has remained a baffling mystery ever since.

In a secluded spot on the north-east side of the hill, the boys discovered a small cave in the rock, hidden behind three pointed slabs of slate. Concealed within were 17 miniature coffins.

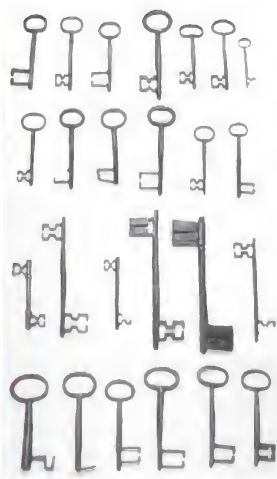
*Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr.*

Office led to his downfall, and Brodie was hanged at the Old Tolbooth on Edinburgh's High Street before a crowd of 40,000 onlookers. A lantern and 25 lock picks used in evidence against him in his trial are now part of the collection at National Museums Scotland. Intriguingly, some of the lock picks were found hidden on Salisbury Crags, just by Arthur's Seat.

Deacon Brodie's grisly story would later inspire Edinburgh-born author Robert Louis Stevenson to create the double life of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.



Above: Three of the miniature coffins on display in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: Arthur's Seat. Image © Saskia Heijltjes. Above: Arthur's Seat. Image © Saskia Heijltjes. Above: Five of the 17 coffins discovered on Arthur's Seat. Above: This calf's heart stuck with pins, on display in the National Museum of Scotland, shows evidence of sympathetic magic practices being carried out in Scotland. However, x-rays have found no evidence of pins or pinholes in the Arthur's Seat figures. Above: These Scottish charms can be seen alongside the Arthur's Seat coffins in the National Museum of Scotland. Above: By day, William Brodie was a cabinet maker, the Deacon (or leader) of the Incorporation of Wrights. This mahogany clothes press was originally thought to be made by



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Yet it is not Brodie but two later infamous anti-heroes of Edinburgh's criminal underworld that could provide the key to the mystery of the Arthur's Seat coffins. Step up Mr William Burke and Mr William Hare.

A shortage of bodies

'Up the close and down the stair,
But and ben wi' Burke and Hare.
Burke's the butcher, Hare's the thief,
Knox the boy that buys the beef.'

19th-century Edinburgh skipping rhyme

By the early 1800s, Edinburgh was renowned as a centre of medical excellence, its reputation as a place to study the healing arts second to none. Key to this education was an understanding of anatomy – yet a vital component of its study was becoming increasingly hard to come by for staff at the city's medical schools: cadavers for dissection. With more and more students thronging the anatomy theatres and fewer criminals meeting their end on the gallows (the usual source of bodies for the dissecting table), the supply was no longer meeting the demand.

Unscrupulous criminals saw a gap in the market, and the practice of 'bodysnatching' – digging up dead bodies from churchyards and

William Brodie, though it is more likely to have been made by Francis Brodie, his father. It is currently on display in the National Museum of Scotland. Also in the collection are some invoices for work done by both Francis and William. Above: These keys and lock picks belonged to Deacon Brodie, and were used as evidence against him at his trial in 1788. They were donated to the museum in 1841 by the clerks of the Justiciary Court in Edinburgh. Above: Mortsafe from Airth, Stirlingshire, 1831, on display near the coffins in the National Museum of Scotland. Grieving relatives, desperate to protect their dead from the 'resurrectionists', would encase coffins in locked iron mortsafes for the first six weeks after burial. Those who couldn't afford the cost would set up vigil in the graveyard instead. Above: This iron collar, from Kingskettle in Fife, was bolted through the bottom of a coffin and around the neck of a corpse, to prevent it being removed by resurrectionists. c. 1820. Above: William Hare and William Burke. Above: The flamboyant lecturer and anatomist Dr Robert Knox. Although Knox was cleared of any criminal activity, his association with Burke and Hare ruined his career. Image © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Above: The replica coffins created for the TV adaption of *The Falls* (left) are bigger than the real coffins. In the novel, a serial killer places similar coffins (right) near the scenes of his crimes. Above: The replica coffins created for the TV adaption of *The Falls* (left) are bigger than the real coffins. In the novel, a serial killer places similar coffins (right) near the scenes of his crimes. Above: Coffin no. XVIII? Above: The label attached to the replica coffin. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir

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selling them to anatomists – soon became rife across the country. This practice horrified the Scottish public, many of whom feared that a dissected body would not rise to life at the Last Judgment.

Yet the corpses sold by the infamous 'bodysnatchers' Burke and Hare to the renowned Edinburgh anatomist and lecturer Dr Robert Knox came not from grave robbing but from murder.

Burke and Hare

Irish immigrants Burke and Hare began their murderous career almost by accident, when an elderly tenant of Hare's boarding house in the West Port died, owing him money. To recoup the losses, Burke and Hare sold the old man's body to Dr Robert Knox, for use in his anatomy school in Surgeon's Square.

Easy money. But with no-one else in the boarding house prepared to drop dead of their own accord, the pair thought they'd hurry the process along a bit. And so began a vicious killing spree that lasted 10 months, during which Burke and Hare dispatched at least 16 victims and earned around £150 (roughly £12,000 now – no mean sum). At first they chose their victims carefully, picking off vagrants who were unlikely to be missed, but as time went by the pair got sloppy, killing local figures who were instantly recognisable when uncovered on the slab.

It was only a matter of time before the law caught up with them, and in November 1828, the murderous duo were arrested. Hare turned King's witness and, granted immunity from prosecution, he sold his old friend down the river. At 8.30am on Christmas morning, 1828, Burke was charged with murder. On 28 January 1829, he was hanged in Edinburgh's Lawnmarket before a crowd of thousands. The following day, his body was publicly

Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr.

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dissected at the University of Edinburgh Medical School – the punishment fitting the crime indeed.

- After Burke's death, a brisk trade in grisly souvenirs began. This book is allegedly made from his skin, following the public dissection of his body after he was hanged. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.
- 'Execution of the notorious William Burke the murderer, who supplied Dr Knox with subjects. A crowd of up to 25,000 people amassed to watch Burke die.
- 'Broadcast' of the Execution of Burke. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.
- Life mask of Hare, on display in the Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh. No-one is quite sure what happened to Hare after the trial. Rumours circulated that he had escaped to London, where he was thrown into a lime pit and blinded, but it is more likely that he returned to Ireland. © The Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh.
- Death mask of William Burke. The mark of the noose can be seen on the neck. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.
- On the orders of the Lord Justice-Clerk, after dissection Burke's skeleton was preserved, 'in order that posterity may keep in remembrance of [his] atrocious crimes'. The skeleton can be seen in the Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh. © The Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh.
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Seventeen coffins for seventeen victims

But what has this grisly tale to do with our story?

Seventeen coffins, seventeen victims; buried just a few years after Burke and Hare's sensational story had hit the headlines. Could the coffins' secret interment represent a substitute burial for the poor, friendless souls dispatched by the murderous pair?

True, while twelve of Burke and Hare's victims were female, the corpses in the coffins are all dressed as men, but perhaps the figures were simply meant as symbols.

And yet, if they were, who buried them? Someone close to the murders, or a sympathetic onlooker? We'll never know.

The Falls

'You should take a look at the little dolls, Mr Rankin'.

Ian Rankin, Introduction to *The Falls*

Since the coffins found their way into the museum collections, they have been on display almost constantly, and continue to fascinate visitors today. One such visitor was the author Ian Rankin, who references the coffins in his Inspector Rebus thriller *The Falls* (2001).

In the introduction to the book, he explains how a member of staff alerted him to their presence:

Plenty of people over the years have come up to me with their excited notions of plots for my next book. I've found precious few of them to be helpful, or viable, but I was intrigued by these 'little dolls'... which is how I made

The Lost World by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr. Above: This beautiful, detailed sculpture, which shows a dinosaur bursting out from a copy of *The Lost World* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was left in the National Museum of Scotland in 2011. You can see more pictures of the sculpture on Flickr.



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the acquaintance of the Arthur's Seat coffins... As soon as I saw them, I knew they would make a great story, especially as no one had come up with an incontrovertible interpretation of their meaning. In other words, there was a story to tell about them...

In 2006, the novel was adapted for television, and the replica coffins made for the film can be seen in the Scotland: A Changing Nation Gallery in the National Museum of Scotland.

XVIII?

And so the story stands: a mystery that will probably never be unravelled, but which has captured the imagination of countless visitors to the National Museum of Scotland.

Dead and buried? Not quite.

In December 2014, the Museum received a mysterious package: a beautifully-made replica of one of the coffins, cryptically entitled 'XVIII?'

Attached was a label, quoting the chilling climax of Robert Louis Stevenson's short story 'The Body Snatcher' (1884), which weaves elements of the Burke and Hare story into a chilling supernatural tale.

Who created this eighteenth coffin?

Could it be the mysterious 'Book Sculptor', whose creations made from the pages of old books have delighted the people of Edinburgh for several years now? Or perhaps her work inspired another artist to leave us this unsigned gift? It's another layer of intrigue to add to the Arthur's Seat coffins mystery.

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A singular fantasy

And so the mystery remains unsolved... until the next theory.

Want to have a go at solving the mystery? Download the Arthur's Seat coffins trail to see the objects featured here in the National Museum of Scotland and join the conversation on Twitter: #arthursseatcoffins.



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After Burke's death, a brisk trade in grisly souvenirs began. This book is allegedly made from his skin, following the public dissection of his body after he was hanged. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.



'Execution of the notorious William Burke the murderer, who supplied Dr Knox with subjects. A crowd of up to 25,000 people amassed to watch Burke die.



'Broadcast' of the Execution of Burke. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.



Life mask of Hare, on display in the Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh. No-one is quite sure what happened to Hare after the trial. Rumours circulated that he had escaped to London, where he was thrown into a lime pit and blinded, but it is more likely that he returned to Ireland. © The Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh.



Death mask of William Burke. The mark of the noose can be seen on the neck. © Surgeons' Hall Museums at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.



On the orders of the Lord Justice-Clerk, after dissection Burke's skeleton was preserved, 'in order that posterity may keep in remembrance of [his] atrocious crimes'. The skeleton can be seen in the Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh. © The Anatomical Museum at the University of Edinburgh.



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Execution of the notorious WILLIAM BURKE, the murderer, who supplied Dr KNOX with subjects.

Eight of these coffins survive to the present day, and are on display in the National Museum of Scotland. Few objects in our collection excite as much intrigue. Who made the intricate carved figures? Who did they represent? Who placed them in their secret sepulchre... and why?



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Almost 200 years after their discovery, we attempt to unravel the mystery of the miniature coffins.

Mystic coffins

Arthur's Seat, the distinctive volcanic hill that rises up beyond Edinburgh's Old Town, is a place steeped in history and mystery. Vaunted as a possible site for King Arthur's fabled Camelot and home to the Celtic Votadini tribe in 400AD, over the centuries it's been the scene of a medieval miracle, an 18th-century murder and a fictional encounter with the Devil.

But its strangest story began in June 1836, when a group of boys out rabbiting on the north-east side of the hill made a bizarre discovery: 17 'Lilliputian coffins', concealed in a recess in the rock.

A singular discovery

The tiny coffins were arranged under slates in three tiers: two tiers of eight and one solitary coffin on the top. Each coffin, only 95mm in length, contained a little wooden figure, expertly carved and dressed in custom-made clothes that had been stitched and glued around them.

What were they doing there? The newspapers of the time fell on the story, and each had a different theory.

'Witchcraft and demonology'

'Satanic spell-manufactory!' cried *The Scotsman*, the first paper to report the tale, in

'Execution of the notorious William Burke the murderer, who supplied Dr Knox with subjects. A crowd of up to 25,000 people amassed to watch Burke die.'

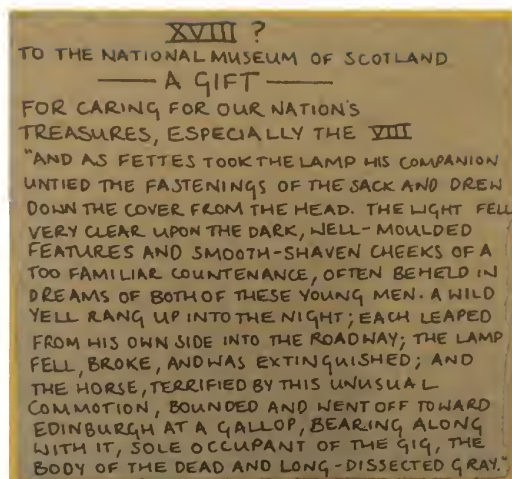


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an article published on 16 July 1836:

Our own opinion would be – had we not some years ago abjured witchcraft and demonology – that there are still some of the weird sisters hovering about Mushat's Cairn [sic] or the Windy Gowl, who retain their ancient power to work the spells of death by entombing the likenesses of those they wish to destroy.

Superstitious customs



A
month
later,
the

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Edinburgh Evening Post proposed a more measured solution, claiming the coffins represented 'An ancient custom which prevailed in Saxony, of burying in effigy departed friends who had died in a distant land'.

The *Caledonian Mercury* added that:

We have also heard of another superstition which exists among some sailors in this country, that they enjoined their wives on parting to give them "Christian burial" in an effigy if they happened [to be lost at sea].

Yet if this is the case, why so many similar coffins? Nobody had any answers.

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'Honorific burial'

After this initial flurry of media interest, the coffins passed into the hands of private collectors, reappearing in 1901, when eight were donated to the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and from there to National Museums Scotland. What happened to the remaining nine? *The Scotsman* tells us that 'a number' were destroyed by the boys, although we don't know how many – certainly no more have come to light since.

On surveying the evidence from *The Scotsman*, *Edinburgh Evening Post* and *Caledonian Mercury*, cuttings from which were donated with the coffins, the Society concluded that 'the intention [of the coffins] seems to be to symbolise honorific burial'.

But the mystery has not been allowed to rest there.

'A very curious mystery'

Five years later, in 1906, *The Scotsman* published another bizarre story about the coffins. A 'lady residing in Edinburgh' had told the paper that her father ('Mr B.') had sometimes been visited at his business premises by a 'daft man'. On one occasion, the man had drawn on a piece of paper a picture of three small coffins, with the dates 1837, 1838 and 1840 written underneath.

In the autumn of 1837, a near relative of Mr B's died; in the following year a cousin died and in 1840 his own brother died. After the funeral, the daft deaf mute appeared again, walked into Mr B's office and "glowering" at him vanished never to return.

'Is it not just possible,' asks *The Scotsman*, that this man was the maker of the Arthur's Seat coffins, 'driven mad by the loss of his treasures'? Or was the whole story 'nothing but coincidences'?

A weird twist to the tale indeed.

The ghost in the coffin

Fast-forward to 1976 and Walter Hävernack, the Director of the Museum of Hamburg History, had come up with a new theory. Referring to a German seafaring superstition of keeping mandrake roots or dolls in tiny coffins as talismen, he postulated that the coffins were a hoard of lucky charms, hidden in the hillside by a merchant, to be sold to sailors.

But while the use of charms persisted in Scotland well into the 19th

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century, no evidence of this particular seafaring tradition has been found.

- Charm made from a seed of *Ipomoea Tuberosa* (Wooden Rose), mounted for suspension, and engraved with the motto of Macneil of Barra.



Charm made from a seed of *Ipomoea Tuberosa* (Wooden Rose), mounted for suspension, and engraved with the motto of Macneil of Barra.



Rowan crosses like this one were used as charms throughout the Highlands.

- Rowan crosses like this one were used as charms throughout the Highlands.

- Flat oblong stone, notched on the sides and pierced with two holes, used as a charm for curing disease in Islay.

- Amber beads used as a charm against blindness by the Macdonalds of Glencoe.

- Perforated stone charm which was hung in a cow byre as protection against bewitchment, from Cumbernauld.

- Charm from Galloway, which

had been hung at the foot of the bed to ward off evil dreams.

- Charm made from a seed of *Ipomoea Tuberosa* (Wooden Rose), mounted for suspension, and engraved with the motto of Macneil of Barra.
- Rowan crosses like this one were used as charms throughout the Highlands.

Examining the evidence

It wasn't until the early 1990s that the coffins were analysed in more detail, by Professor



Flat oblong stone, notched on the sides and pierced with two holes, used as a charm for curing disease in Islay.



Amber beads used as a charm against blindness by the Macdonalds of Glencoe.



Perforated stone charm which was hung in a cow byre as protection against bewitchment, from Cumbernauld.

Samuel Menefee and Dr Allen Simpson, a curator at the museum, who at the time were both Visiting Fellows at the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Here's what they discovered:

- The figures all appear to be made by the same hand, although it's possible the coffins were crafted by two different people.
- Some of the materials and tools used – wood, iron embellishments, nails, a sharp, hooked knife – indicate the coffins could have been fashioned by a shoemaker.
- The figures seem to form a set, and their upright bearing, flat feet and swinging arms suggest they may have been toy soldiers. Their eyes are open, making it unlikely they were originally designed as corpses.
- Some of the figures are missing their arms – perhaps removed so that they would fit in the coffins.
- The fabric the little bodies are dressed in dates from the early 1830s, so they hadn't lain buried for more than six years.

You can read their full research findings in the National Museum of Scotland Research Library.

So we know where the bodies came from and when they were buried... but what do they represent? Perhaps to understand the mystery more fully, we need to step back in time, to early 19th-century Edinburgh...

Stepping back in time

'To look over the South Bridge and see the Cowgate below full of crying hawkers, is to view one rank of society from another in the twinkling of an eye.'

Robert Louis Stevenson,
Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes
(1879)

Celebrated as the seat of the Scottish Enlightenment, transformed by the creation of the Georgian New Town and, in 1822, graced by the first visit of a reigning monarch since 1650, Edinburgh had much to boast about in the early 19th century.

Yet this bright, sophisticated, intellectual hotbed of a city also had a dark side, highlighted by the sharp division between the elegant, well-to-do New Town and the increasingly dilapidated, slum-like conditions of the Old Town, and personified by the notorious Deacon Brodie (28 September 1741 – 1 October 1788).

By day a respectable tradesman, councillor and Deacon of the Incorporation of Wrights, by night William Brodie turned his skills as a locksmith and cabinetmaker to more nefarious uses: breaking and entering. A daring plan to burgle the Excise



Charm from Galloway, which had been hung at the foot of the bed to ward off evil dreams.



Charm made from a seed of Ipomoea Tuberosa (Wooden Rose), mounted for suspension, and engraved with the motto of Macneil of Barra.



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The Myth of the Dalby Spook :: isleofman.com

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In the early 1930s, a remote farm in the west of the Island received an unusual visitor who left a mystery which lasts to this day...

A Visitor to Doarlish Cashen

Jim Irving was a former commercial traveller who decided to farm; to that end, he settled at Doarlish Cashen (Cashen's Gap) in Dalby with his wife Margaret and daughter Voirrey. It was a tough existence: the isolated farmhouse had no electricity or running water, and the farm did not do well.

In 1931, they were suddenly joined by a most unusual visitor. Scratching sounds from behind the house's wooden panelling turned out to be the work of a mongoose. One possible explanation for the creature's appearance is that in 1912, a nearby farmer had supposedly introduced mongooses to his land to control the rabbit population.

This was no ordinary mongoose, however. At first elusive, he attached himself to Voirrey, who was 13 years old at this time, and began to mimic human speech.

He then began to talk of his own accord. Gef, as he introduced himself, claimed to be 'an extra, extra clever mongoose' who had been born in Delhi on June 7, 1852. He soon had a fine command of English, not to mention a smattering of other languages and a repertoire of songs. A capricious character, he could be highly disruptive and rude at some times; playful and affectionate at others. Gef would catch rabbits to 'earn his keep' and make forays to neighbouring farms to spy on their affairs. He also enjoyed riding on the buses around the Island and would return with the latest gossip from fellow travelers. His hiding place was above a boxed-in partition in Voirrey's bedroom and it was to the young girl that he remained closest. He also spoke with Jim but his relationship with Mrs Irving seemed to be a little cooler.

Gef In the Spotlight

News of Gef reached the local papers, who reported on the case in a rather tongue in cheek fashion. A visit to the farm left local reporter J. Radcliffe in no doubt that 'Gef's' voice in fact belonged to Voirrey.

Undeterred, Jim Irving pursued the matter. He wrote to the English ghost hunter Harry Price, asking him to come and investigate. Initially, Price was too busy and sent his friend, a Captain James McDonald, in his stead. McDonald had no sightings and was unable to prove that the voice he heard was Gef's. A sample of fur supposedly left by Gef but proven, under analysis, to belong to a dog, turned out to have come from Mona, Voirrey's sheepdog.

In July 1935, Price finally came to the Isle of Man, accompanied by Richard Lambert, the editor of BBC magazine The Listener. Unfortunately, much to the Irvings' distress, Gef did not

make himself known to either man, only reappearing after their departure. Irving forwarded Gef's paw and tooth prints pressed into plasticine to Price, who in turn sent them to the British Natural History Museum. They reported back that while one print was a dog's and another, possibly that of a North American Raccoon, none belonged to a mongoose.

Price and Lambert co-authored a book called *The Haunting of Cashen's Gap*, which did neither supported the Irvings nor went as far as to say they were perpetrating a hoax. As a result of his input, Lambert led and won a slander case after it was suggested that he was unfit to sit on the board of the British Film Institute.

The last person to conduct an investigation was a Hungarian journalist, Nandor Fodor, who was also a Research Officer for the International Institute for Psychical Research. While Fodor, perhaps predictably, also left Doarlish Cashen without a sighting of Gef, he refrained from stating that the mongoose did not exist. Initially suspecting that Gef was a poltergeist - in his interpretation, the product of a conflict within the subconscious mind - Fodor eventually decided that he could not reach a definitive conclusion.

What Happened Next?

Was Gef a poltergeist? A product of Voirrey Irving's lonely imagination? Or was he exactly what he claimed to be? The story has never been solved. The Irvings left the Isle of Man for the UK in 1937 and Doarlish Cashen was taken over by a farmer named Graham. In 1947, Graham trapped and killed an unusual animal which was neither stoat, weasel or ferret. Was this Gef? In time, Doarlish Cashen was left empty and eventually demolished. In 1970, the paranormal magazine *FATE* ran an interview with Voirrey Irving, who was tracked down by journalist Walter McGraw. She was reluctant to discuss the episode which had caused such upheaval in their lives but still insisted that Gef had existed.

Further Reading

The Haunting of Cashen's Gap: A Modern Miracle Investigated - Harry Price with R.S. Lambert (Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1936)
Confessions of a Ghost Hunter - Harry Price (Putnam & Co. Ltd., London, 1936)

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In February 1948, distress calls were picked up by numerous ships near Indonesia from the Dutch freighter *SS Ourang Medan*. The chilling message was, "All officers including captain are dead lying in chartroom and bridge. Possibly whole crew dead." This message was followed by indecipherable Morse code then one final grisly message... "I die."



When the first rescue vessel arrived on the scene a few hours later, they tried to hail the *Ourang Medan* but there was no response to their hand and whistle signals. A boarding party was sent to the ship and what they found was a frightening sight that has made the *Ourang Medan* one of the strangest and scariest ghost ship stories of all time. All the crew and officers of the *Ourang Medan* were dead, their eyes open, faces looking towards the sun, arms

outstretched and a look of terror on their faces. Even the ship's dog was dead, found snarling at some unseen enemy. When nearing the bodies in the boiler room, the rescue crew felt a chill though the temperature was near 110°F.

The decision was made to tow the ship back to port but before they could get underway, smoke began rolling up from the hull. The rescue crew left the ship and barely had time to cut the tow lines before the *Ourang Medan* exploded and sank.

To this day, the exact fate of the *Ourang Medan* and her crew remain a mystery. Some say that pirates killed the crew and sabotaged the ship, others claim that she was transporting an illicit cargo of chemicals such as potassium cyanide and nitroglycerine (both of which become dangerous when combined with sea water). The condition of the bodies found aboard and haunting distress call, however, has led to more rampant speculation involving aliens, conspiracies, and even ghosts.

What really happened to the *Ourang Medan*? The only ones who know for sure rest at the dark bottom of the mysterious and unforgiving sea.

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The Red Death: The Pellagra Epidemic in the Early 20th Century American South

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A victim of Pellagra

Mysterious diseases have plagued humanity throughout our history. In ancient days, there was little that could be done to explain, let alone stop, the ravages of

epidemics. Such scourges as small pox, cholera, and the bubonic plague killed huge numbers of people and disappeared as quickly as they came, leaving ancient cultures reeling in their wake.

In the 20th century, mankind began to get a better handle on the causes of disease. Even so, a mysterious disease ravaged the American South. Its symptoms were horrific and debilitating: red, peeling skin, diarrhea, mental problems up to and including dementia, and ultimately in many cases, death. The disease was pellagra, a disease caused by niacin deficiency, and it roared through the South throughout the first half of the twentieth century, killing upwards of 100,000 people before it was finally

stopped.

A mystery disease

Pellagra was first described in Spain by Gaspar Casal y Julian in 1735. The disease was mainly seen in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean during the 18th and 19th century. In particular, the disease was studied in Italy and Spain. Gaetano Strambio in particular studied the disease extensively. He proved that pellagra was more than only a skin disease. He was the first to connect pellagra to diet, claiming the cause was spoiled bread and polenta. Another Italian physician, Cesare Lobroso, determined in 1869 that pellagra was caused by a poison present in spoiled corn, initiating the connection between corn and pellagra that would continue into the mid twentieth century.

When the disease appeared for the first time in American in 1902, it left doctors baffled. Experts were divided from the beginning of the outbreak—some suspected spoiled corn was the culprit, in keeping with Lobroso's determination almost fifty years earlier, while others thought the disease was spread by insects or contaminated water. The one point of agreement was that pellagra was most prevalent among the poor. Early studies suggested that the disease was spread by some as yet unknown pathogen. In 1914, the US Public Health Service dispatched Dr. Joseph Goldberger, who had success fighting previous epidemics, to South Carolina to study the pellagra plague. His findings would cause a political tumult that would delay the needed methods to stop the disease for years.



Dr. Joseph Goldberger

The Three M's

Dr. Goldberger examined institutions such as prisons and asylums where pellagra raged unchecked. He found that, while patients and inmates at these institutions often suffered from pellagra, their nurses and guards did so only rarely. If pellagra were infectious, this should not be the case. Dr. Goldberger concluded that the difference between the inmates and their caretakers lay in their diet. While guards and nurses had access to a greater variety of food, their charges' diets primarily consisted of cornmeal, molasses, and small bits of fatty pork back. This was similar to the traditional diet of the Southern poor, called the three M's: meal, molasses, and meat.

Extrapolating his results to the broader population, Dr. Goldberger realized that the traditional Southern diet itself was the cause of the epidemic, particularly among poor populations who did not have access to wider variety of foods. This revelation caused a ruckus among Southerners, especially the political class. The post Reconstruction South was still sensitive over its defeat in the Civil War, and saying that the cause of the horrific disease ravaging its population was due to economic factors was seen as a slight against Southern pride and the idea that the South would rise again to its former greatness.

Dr. Goldberger struggled against this blowback at first, but he found that the forces who favored the infectious theory of pellagra's spread were too intransigent to be convinced. He devoted himself to figuring out what specific deficiency was behind the disease. He died of renal cancer in 1929 before finding that which he sought. The final revelation came in 1937, when it was found that niacin deficiency, among others, was the cause of pellagra. The subsequent enrichment of flour with niacin and other B vitamins virtually eliminated pellagra in the United States.

The law of unintended consequences

The question remains: what caused the pellagra epidemic to occur so suddenly in the early 20th century? There were likely multiple causes. It is a given that the poor Southern diet mixed with a reluctance to admit that the cultural touchstone were both factors in extending the epidemic. However, the diet was nothing new in the South, and while it is not entirely known how widespread pellagra was before 1902, there is no evidence of it being to epidemic proportions before the 20th century.

Looking to another, similar disease can shed some light on the beginning of the epidemic. Beriberi, a deficiency of the nutrient thiamin, became epidemic in the Far East in the 1880s, shortly after a new method for milling rice was developed. Similarly, a new method of milling corn was developed around 1900. Called degermination, it removed the germ of the corn, resulting in a product that was more stable but lacking in many of the nutrients present in corn milled the traditional way. This explained then why pellagra was more common in institutions, where corn meal was the primary food source. It also explained why the disease was more common in mill workers, who ate corn meal shipped from the Midwest that had undergone the degermination process. It was less common among rural farmers, who ate corn prepared

in traditional stone mills.

So, then it was a confluence of factors that brought about the pellagra epidemic. Cultural bias, technological innovation, and long standing tradition conspired to produce an epidemic that sickened millions and killed around 100,000. Largely forgotten today, the southern pellagra epidemic is a case study in both the importance of good science and the strength of tradition in the study of disease.

Sources:

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This entry was posted in Accidents and Disasters, Culture, Politics, and Religion and tagged epidemics, pellagra, the South on February 14, 2016 by Andrew Kincaid.

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DDLY HISTORICAL

Phantoms haunt the pages of history. Strange, unsolved occurrences where a faceless attacker tormented a community for days, weeks, or even months before

disappearing as suddenly as they came. Many cases of phantom attackers, such as that of the Halifax Slasher, are instances of collective delusion, where the idea of a threat takes hold in a community and becomes part of the shared reality of that community. Other instances, such as the Phantom Barber of Pascagoula, are less clear cut, more likely the work of a stranger on a rampage.

Perhaps the strangest phantoms to lurk in the night struck not with razors or scissors, but with sound. The sleepy town of Paradis, Louisiana, was haunted in 1950 by a musical stranger who focused his attentions on one resident in particular: 18 year old Jacquelyn Cadow. For months, the man known as the Phantom Whistler allegedly whistled wolf calls beneath her bedroom window. But when the young beauty decided to wed the love of her life, 26 year old Louisiana State Trooper Herbert Belsom, the phantom changed his tune, whistling a funeral dirge. Even more frightening, young Jacquelyn received phone calls from the whistler, filled with threats. One such phone call, quoted by Jacquelyn's mother, said:

"I'll kill her. I'll stick a knife in her. Your daughter will never marry Herbert."

Louisiana State Police and the local sheriff's department investigated the strange reports, but little progress was made in finding the stalker. The drama caught the attention of the entire village, not to mention a lot of attention from outside. Police chafed at the unwanted attention, thinking the press and villagers would only egg on the stalker and make the investigation more difficult. Police stationed at the house could find no evidence of the whistler. No officer ever reported even hearing the whistling, though members of the Cadow family still claimed the whistler was outside.

Even with the threats, Jacquelyn went ahead with her wedding, marrying Herbert Belsom on October 1, 1950. The phantom whistler did not make good on his threats, and was never heard from again. Still, the mystery remains. Who was the Phantom Whistler? A jilted ex lover? A stalker? A prankster?

The truth may never be known for certain, but it is good to note that the Sheriff of St. Charles Parish thought the whistler was nothing more than a hoax, going so far as to call the case "an inside job." The sheriff never went on to elaborate on what he meant in saying the incident was a hoax, and he never explained who he thought had perpetrated the hoax, or why. Could the Cadow family have been the perpetrators? Or, perhaps, the whole incident was a small outbreak of collective delusion among the Cadow household, brought on by pre-wedding jitters? Without more information, it is impossible to tell for sure. The identity of the Phantom Whistler will remain an enigma.

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This entry was posted in Mysteries and Strange Occurrences and tagged collective delusion, Jacquelyn Cadow, the phantom whistler on January 31, 2016 by Andrew Kincaid.

2 thoughts on "The Phantom Whistler"

1. **graham64** February 5, 2016 at 4:14 am

I am trying to work out how the whistler knew that Jacquelyn was going to marry Herbert, and thus changed his whistling to a funeral dirge.

1. **Andrew Kincaid** Post author February 5, 2016 at 10:08 am

I bet that the marriage was announced in the paper. Even if it wasn't, it was a village of 200 people. I live in a town way larger than that, and everyone still knows everyone else's business. So the word would have spread like wildfire whether it was in the paper or not.

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The Revenant and the real Hugh Glass: how historically accurate is the film?

Friday 26th February 2016

historyextra.com



Set in the 1820s, *The Revenant* follows frontiersman Hugh Glass as he journeys through the American wilderness, badly mauled from a bear attack and abandoned by his fellow trappers.

But how historically accurate is the film, which boasts 12 Oscar nominations? Here, Professor Jon T Coleman investigates...



Leonardo DiCaprio as Hugh Glass in *The Revenant*. Copyright Twentieth Century Fox. (MovieStillsDB.com)

In the long middle of *The Revenant*, somewhere between the DIY throat-repair scene and the hero's taking of shelter inside a dead gutted horse, Leonardo DiCaprio's Hugh Glass happens upon a mountain of bison skulls. He stares up at the pyramid, dumbstruck by the carnage. The fog of his breath in the freezing mountain air communicates his sorrow. It's one of dozens of terrifying and beautiful moments in Alejandro González Iñárritu's Oscar-nominated movie, and it underscores the existential brutality of Glass's ordeal. He is not merely

surviving a natural wilderness; he is crawling through a graveyard made by American violence, racism and greed.

The bison skull pyramid is historic. We know heaps of bones like this existed because photographers took pictures of them. The images that inspired the moviemakers haunt the internet on numerous websites. A professional hunter, Glass saw plenty of bison remains, but he never witnessed a gigantic pile of them. The craniums accumulated near western railroad depots for shipment back east to be ground up as fertilizer. Railroads, fertiliser factories and photographs were as alien to Glass as airplanes, technology parks and 'selfies'. The pyramids and the business that spawned them belonged in the 1870s; Glass was mauled by a grizzly bear and left for dead in 1823.

Hugh Glass being left to his fate having been savaged by a bear, 1978 (gouache on paper), Baraldi, Severino (b1930)/Private Collection/© Look and Learn/Bridgeman Images

The bison skulls represent the pastiche that qualifies as history in *The Revenant*. Inspired by real people and events, the movie collects basically accurate moments and scatters them around to create sensations of veracity. For example, the Arikara attack that opens the movie did happen; Glass and his fur-trapping colleagues did indeed swim for their keelboats to escape with their lives. If you watch carefully, however, you can spot a visitation from a ghost



from the fur trade past that is out of time and place.

Just as the mayhem kicks off, a naked white man flashes (literally) on screen before being felled by a shower of arrows. At the sight of the man, someone yells “Colter!” This blip is a treat for mountain man buffs. A fur trapper named John Colter performed a famous nude run across the Great Plains in 1809 to elude a party of Blackfoot Indians who took his gun and stripped him bare. Colter was not with Glass and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company men at the Arikara battle. Colter was real, and he endured a hellacious western ordeal, but he did not belong in *The Revenant*.

The list of basically accurate but misplaced people, events and attitudes includes Colter; the bison skull pyramid; the United States Army’s attack on the peaceful Native American village; Hugh Glass’s wife and son; and the virulent racism of the film’s villain, Tom Hardy’s Fitzgerald. Colter, the skulls and the US attacks on civilians existed in different time periods. Following the Civil War the US military targeted several Indian encampments in the winter, burning homes and killing women and children, to cripple the groups’ ability to feed and clothe themselves and to force them to return to reservations. The primary targets for this ‘total war’ strategy, however, were not the Pawnees – who often acted as American allies and worked as scouts for the US Army – but the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Sioux. The assault that took Glass’s beloved Pawnee wife and set the stage for his revenge seeking was a fiction sprinkled with bits of true Indian history from a future period.



Leonardo DiCaprio as Hugh Glass in 'The Revenant'. Copyright Twentieth Century Fox. (MovieStillsDB.com)

It would have been unsurprising if Glass had a Pawnee wife and child, but there is no proof that he did. Western fur traders and Indian women often formed partnerships and families to ease economic transactions. Likewise, slavery and racism were prominent features of the US in the 1820s,

especially in St Louis, where the Rocky Mountain Fur Company gathered its employees. Western hunters, however, had a reputation for befriending and loving non-white peoples. The harsh racial divisions that Fitzgerald tries to enforce, and that Glass tries to instruct his son, Hawk, to tread lightly around, were not the only ways of thinking about race in the west of the 1820s.

But do these discrepancies matter? I, for one, enjoyed the movie and was blown away by the vision of Iñárritu and cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki. The bear attack and the

outrageous suffering Glass endured hit the historical mark with remarkable accuracy. And, in the end, unlike historians, filmmakers can always fall back on artistic inspiration to excuse moving piles of bones across space and time to create the perfect elegiac tone.

Given how little we actually know about Hugh Glass, movies like these are not without their own historical merit. Glass was not, after all, that accurate to begin with. We only have one of his letters and he never wrote or spoke about the bear attack, the crawl or his revenge with actual historical reporters. Storytellers therefore reconstructed the events from second- and third-hand accounts. And they reconstructed quickly and enthusiastically.

Glass was attacked by the bear in 1823, and by 1825 he had become a fictionalised character in stories published in a Philadelphia literary magazine and in eastern newspapers. The bear that gashed his body opened him up to artistic exploitation, and imagination flowed in and carried him into the future on tales composed by others. Glass comes to us as make-believe as well as history, and he demonstrates how art and life got mixed together from the start. *The Revenant* is the latest piece of culture floating in a storytelling current that started when a trapper accidentally stepped between a mother grizzly and her cubs.



Hugh Glass being savaged by a bear, 1978 (gouache on paper), Baraldi, Severino (b1930)/Private Collection/© Look and Learn/Bridgeman Images

The truth of Hugh Glass is far less satisfying than the fictions surrounding him. He pops into sight in 1823, signing an employment contract with the St Louis fur company run by William Henry Ashley and Andrew Henry. Later stories say that Glass came from Pennsylvania or maybe Scotland. Some tales say he was a sailor who was captured by the Gulf Coast pirate Jean Lafitte and that he escaped to join the Pawnees, who taught him how to hunt beaver and bison in the west. After the bear attack and recovery, Glass continued working in the fur trade. He appears in business records and is mentioned several times in letters and reminiscences. Glass was killed during a skirmish with the Arikaras in 1833.

The historic record of Hugh Glass was as bare-boned as a bison skull. There's no proof where he came from or what he did before joining the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. His life post-mauling was better documented, but there is no diary or interview that offers a glimpse into his thoughts and passions. Dreams and stories have filled the blank spaces he left behind.

Jon T Coleman is a professor at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, and the author of *Here Lies Hugh Glass: A Mountain Man, a Bear, and the Rise of the American Nation* (Hill & Wang, 2012). To find out more, [click here](#). You can follow Jon on Twitter [@lostjcoleman](#).

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<http://scienceline.org>

The smell of death

Mixing ordinary odors to create death's perfume



By Dyani Sabin | Posted February 21, 2016

Posted in: Featured, Life Science

Tags: chemistry, death, dogs, Ever Wondered?

The crisp, earthy wind in the woods shifted and suddenly carried the pungent odor of a dead animal. In my disgust, I shied away and narrowly missed stepping on a decaying raccoon. Saved by a nose. I shudder to think about what would have

happened if I'd had a cold.

Death's distinctive smell saved me from near disaster. Despite its instantly recognizable odor, the scent is extremely complicated, with four distinctive stages and a highly variable chemical makeup.

Over 800 chemicals make up the smell of death, according to Anna Williams, a forensic anthropologist at the University of Huddersfield in England. About 480 have been identified for human death alone. Not just for the morbidly curious, death smell is a powerful tool for police and disaster workers, who use specially trained cadaver dogs to help locate missing bodies. To improve training for these dogs, researchers have been working to identify the chemical composition of death. They hope to find a unique cocktail of chemicals that dogs could learn to associate solely with corpses.

But building a recipe of the smell of death is still a rough science. Although we have an idea of some of the chemicals that make up the death smell, we're still just scratching the surface, according to Williams.

In her work with the police and assisting in scent-training cadaver dogs, Williams and her team have noticed that the skills and sensitivities of individual dogs vary greatly. A good cadaver dog has a strong work ethic and a great sense of smell. Two cadaver dogs can interpret a smell differently, just like two people can.

"If you were given an artificial rose, you might say 'oh, that smells of rose,' but somebody else might say 'that smells of bananas,' because it's triggering a different response," she says. Smell identification is subjective and based on individual experience. Williams hopes that

instead of training dogs using decomposing tissue, a chemical combination could be created in a lab. This would make training easier, more standardized, and lead to dogs that are better at finding lost bodies.

Achieving this death smell cocktail is extremely difficult for several reasons. First, there are multiple stages of death, and each one has a slightly different chemical signature according to Arpad Vass, a forensic anthropologist at the Law Enforcement Innovation Center at the University of Tennessee. These stages are further altered by environmental conditions: moisture, air temperature and treatment of the body.

Despite this variability and complexity, some of the most important scents in different stages of decomposition have been identified by researchers like Eva Cuypers, a forensic toxicologist at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. These researchers can even name consumer products that mimic those odor ingredients. However, the overall proportions of the various death smells are still uncertain.

Some of these component compounds are not discernable to the human nose, but others have strong and sometimes surprising scents. A large number of them are potentially dangerous: they are flammable, carcinogenic or, in the atmosphere, ozone depleting. In death, they're occurring naturally and at low concentrations, but attempting to physically mix this scent could be extremely dangerous — so don't try this at home!

Still, if you ever wondered what you were reacting to as you avoided a decaying raccoon, here are recipes drawn from Vass' odor mortis representing the common scents that make up the various stages of the smell of death.

GENERAL DEATH SMELL

The general death smell varies based on the stage of decomposition, which occurs in four distinct stages — each with a slightly different scent profile. It remains in the background of all death smells. Here are some common products that mimic the odors of those chemicals:

citrus	gasoline	pineapple
citrus infused butter	freshly cut grass	rotting radishes
coal	mint	tar
flowers	nail polish remover	wine

STAGE ONE: FRESH DEATH

The first stage is characterized by bacterial action in the body. Externally, the body will not look terribly different, but the smell is already distinctive. The overall odor can be generated by these products:

almonds	fish	mothballs
ant-panic pheromone	gasoline/nail polish remover	refrigerator coolant
bitter herbs	green twigs	rose
coconut oil	hyacinth	tallow
Crisco	jet fuel	wax candles

STAGE TWO: GASEOUS BLOAT

The second stage of decomposition, when the body bloats with gas, has a powerful and unfortunately familiar human smell as bodily fluids are pushed out of the body. The odor will change based on the environment: heat, moisture, and variation between personal body chemistry. The odor can be generated by:

asphalt	garlic	Styrofoam
feces	gasoline	urine
Freon fridge coolant	plastic	vomit

STAGE THREE: ACTIVE DECOMPOSITION

The stage of active decomposition — the terrifying moment in the woods with a partially-exposed raccoon skeleton — has a particularly broad scent profile. Often there are multiple chemicals with similar smells. In this stage, there are multiple chemicals that make up the smells of gas, freshly cut grass, whiskey and bananas. These are the products that generate some of the overall smell:

almond	gasoline (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	straw
banana (1, 2)	malt	vodka
boiled cabbage	molasses	wet cereal
chocolate	nail polish remover	whiskey (1, 2)
freshly cut grass (1, 2)	paint thinner	Windex
fruit	rotten eggs	

STAGE FOUR: SKELETAL REMAINS

In the final stage of decomposition, only the skeleton remains. The smell here is not as

strong, but a number of chemicals from earlier in the process return. Here are products that make the overall scent:

citrus flowers	dry cleaning fluid	paint thinner
coal	mint	tar
degreaser	nail polish (1, 2)	

Plus these returning chemical scents:

almonds	coconut oil	hyacinth
ant-panic pheromone	Freon fridge coolant	tallow
bitter herbs	gasoline (1, 2, 3)	

comments

All comments are moderated, your comment will not appear on the site until it has been approved.

- 1.
2. Does a person's race or ethnic group or location change the chemical composition?

Jeff, February 23, 2016 at 8:04 pm

3. Great story! The recipes are fascinating, and I appreciate the links. Dogs most certainly have a nose for death. The stinkiest things are the ones that they want to roll in —perfume of sorts. Again, great piece, and it makes me want to read more on the topic.

Kathy Abromeit, February 23, 2016 at 10:24 pm

4. Great story! I love that Windex made it into a death smell recipe!

John Sabin, February 23, 2016 at 10:44 pm

5. Another excellent article by Ms. Sabin! I enjoy the wide range of topics this science writer researches. I rarely read about science, so these articles are all elucidating.

Rebecca Cross, February 24, 2016 at 8:47 am

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THE VAN METER VISITOR: GHOST? CRYPTID? ALIEN? OR HOAX?

micahackerman.com

The Official Page Of Author Micah Ackerman

THE VAN METER VISITOR: GHOST? CRYPTID? ALIEN? OR HOAX?

4/1/2015



Picture



Picture

Before I get to today's post I want to let everyone know that my novel "The Third Gender" is on sale for .99¢ for the next day and then it will revert back to its original

price. Download it by **CLICKING HERE**

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00J81PJOE>

Today I would like to talk about the "Van Meter Visitor." Back in 1903 in the town of Van Meter Iowa something that couldn't quite be explained happened. Some kind of creature was spotted flying between rooftops. supposedly this strange entity was the size of a man with smooth, bat-like wings. The beast had one horn protruding from it's forehead which emitted a blinding light. Many respected towns people witnessed the entity and some even fired shotguns, possibly wounding it. here is an excerpt from The Des Moines Register:

"THE STORY GOES LIKE THIS: Over a series of nights in the fall of 1903, several respected and prominent men of Van Meter reported a half human, half animal with enormous, smooth bat wings flying about. It let off a powerful stench and scared the daylights out of them because it moved at speeds never seen before. And it shot a blinding light from its horned head. Shots were fired each time, first by implement dealer U.G. Griffith as it flew across building tops. The monster shrugged them off like a minor nuisance. The next night the town doctor and bank cashier Peter Dunn separately saw the creature and opened fire. Dunn even took a plaster cast of the "great three-toed tracks."

The following night, O.V. White, reportedly a dead-eye with a gun, was awakened from his slumber in his quarters above the hardware store and shot at the creature that was perching atop a telephone pole. This awakened Sidney Gregg, who had been sleeping

in his store nearby. Gregg said the monster hopped like a kangaroo. Even the local high school teacher saw it and deemed it some sort of antediluvian monster."

The creature or spirit was followed to an abandoned mine close by the center of town. A group of men posted watch outside of the mine and at one point two of the anomalies flew out and circled around before flying off. The creature returned the next morning to a mob of armed men. The monster used a loud noise and a gut-wrenching stink to defend itself.



Picture



Picture

Many of you guys may remember the time that I have posted about the Mothman. It seems that this is a similar creature. You

may also remember that a creature like this was also seen around Chernobyl. So could we be looking at a mysterious species? Could these be intelligent beings that have come here from another planet? Or is this a different sort of thing?

Other theories are that the Van Meter visitor could possibly be a ghost. Perhaps it's the spirit of a miner that perished in the nearby mine and maybe that light is a headlamp that miners use. Or could this be a demon? We have all heard descriptions of demons that sound like they could fit the bill.

What do you think happened back in 1903?

Scientists Have Just Discovered What The Very First Animal On Earth Was

all-that-is-interesting.com

Scientists Have Discovered What The Very First Animal On Earth Was

By Nickolaus Hines on February 24, 2016 in Animals, Discoveries, Nature, Now, and Science



First Animal On Earth

New research shows that the simple sea sponge was the very first animal on Earth. Image Source: Wikimedia Commons

It's been confirmed: the first animal to ever evolve on Earth is...the sea sponge. We realize this might be a little disappointing, but wait, there's more! Real life sea sponges will never be as popular as Sponge Bob, but they are *much* more interesting than you might first assume.

The news broke in a research paper published on February 22 by MIT biologists. The comb jelly (which, at first glance, is more intriguing) was previously thought to be the first animal on Earth, but the new paper's authors argue that life went back much, much further.

When the researchers found a biomarker (24-isopropylcholestane, a type of cholesterol) excreted by the sea sponge in rocks from the Cryogenian period, they were able to discern that the sponge was alive a staggering 640 million years ago, 250 million years earlier than previously thought.

And, furthermore, the sea sponge still exists today, which is a mighty impressive feat.

So what else is so interesting about them? Well, first off, it's important to note that they are indeed animals, not plants. In fact, they remain the most primitive animals living on the planet today: They are multi-cellular, but they lack organs, muscles, and nerves.

Despite being such simple creatures, there are more than 5,000 unique sponge species, ranging in size from a single inch to four feet long. No matter their size, sea sponges have the distinction of being the only animals in the world that don't have any body symmetry at all.

And it turns out that, despite their appearance, they're the romantic type as well. You might not think it, but they reproduce sexually in an act called "buddying," in which sperm is released into the ocean by a sponge, and then nearby sponges suck it up, fertilizing an internal egg. Sea sponges really know how to get around.

If all that doesn't give you a little more respect for the humble sea sponge, just keep in mind that the whole of evolution, including the fact that every one of us is here and alive today, might look a whole lot different without them.

For more of the fascinating creatures that fill our oceans, check out the mostbizarre ocean creatures in the world, and then browse a gallery of some of nature's coolest sharks.

Nickolaus Hines is an editorial intern at All That Is Interesting. He graduated from Auburn University in 2015, moved to New York and now publishes things on the Internet.

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THE YUKON BEAVER EATER, AND GROUND SLOTHS IN NEW ZEALAND?

blogspot.com

<http://karlshuker.blogspot.com/2016/03/the-yukon-beaver-eater-and-ground.html?m=1>



Tuesday, 8 March 2016



Restoration of *Megatherium* (Wikipedia/Public domain)

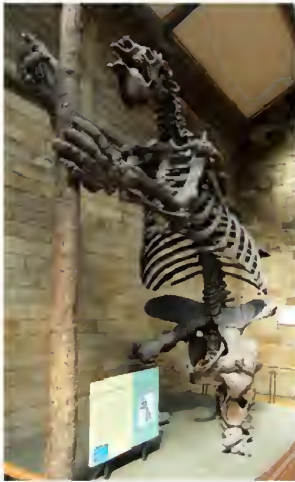
When we think of sloths, we generally picture those famously sluggish, dog-sized, tree-dwelling beasts that spend much of their time hanging upside-down from branches in modern-day Central and South America. Millions of years ago, however, there were several additional, very different morphological types – of which the most famous and dramatic were the ground sloths.

Most of these were primarily terrestrial, some were rather bovine in appearance but with shaggy fur, and many were considerably larger than their arboreal relatives. Although principally quadrupedal, ground sloths were capable of squatting erect on their hind legs to browse upon high-level foliage, and their distribution range included not only tropical mainland Latin America, but also North America as well as various of the Caribbean islands.

There were four separate taxonomic families containing ground sloths. The largest species were the megatheriids, typified by *Megatherium* ('big beast') from the Pleistocene of Patagonia, which attained the size of an elephant (recently split from the megatheriids into their own taxonomic family are the nothrotheriids). At the other extreme were the megalonychids, some being the smallest of all ground sloths, but also including the ox-sized *Megalonyx* ('big claw'), which earned its name from the huge claw on the third toe of each of its hind feet. This latter family also contains today's two-toed tree sloths.

Skeleton of *Megatherium* (© Dr Karl Shuker)

Intermediate in size between the above groups of ground sloth were the mylodontids - which



are of particular cryptozoological interest. For although the last representatives of all types of ground sloth officially died out several millennia ago, reports of mysterious creatures resembling these supposedly bygone beasts have emerged from several different Neotropical locations in modern times - including in particular some compelling evidence to suggest that Brazil may harbour a species of living mylodontid, eluding scientific discovery yet well known to the native people sharing its secluded jungle domain, referring to this cryptid as the mapinguary.

Moreover, certain putative ground sloths living in modern times have been reported from localities outside the Neotropics, including the following pair of hitherto little-known examples.

THE SAYTOECHIN OR YUKONBEAVER EATER

In September 1989, the then recently-formed British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club (BCSCC) was contacted by a Canadian First Nation member named Dawn Charlie concerning a mysterious beast featuring in their oral traditions relating to Yukon's wildlife. The beast in question was referred to as the saytoechin (which translates as 'beaver eater'), and was described as being bigger than even the biggest grizzly bear, and feeding principally upon beavers, which it apparently captured by flipping up their lodges and then seizing the exposed beavers inside. When Native Americans living in the area were shown a book of extinct mammals, they selected an illustration of a ground sloth as the saytoechin, and the most recent reported sighting of one dates from the mid-1980s. As documented in 1990 by BCSCC co-founder Prof. Paul LeBlond in #4 of the Club's newsletter after interviewing Dawn Charlie, the details given by her concerning this sighting are as follows:

The latest report was from Violet Johnny, my husband's sister, who was fishing with her husband and her mother at the head of Tatchun Lake 4 or 5 years ago. An animal came out of the woods, 8 or 9 feet high, bigger than a grizzly bear. It was a "saytoechin" and it was coming towards them. They panicked, fired a few shots over its head and finally managed to get the motor going and took off. There are other reports. There is also a report that a white man shot one in a small lake in that area. Beaver eaters are supposed to live in the mountainous area east of Frenchman Lake.

Although ground sloths are generally thought of as tropical Latin (particularly South) American creatures, before their official extinction at the end of the Pleistocene some species had migrated northwards and had indeed established themselves in parts of North America. At least five genera are currently represented by fossils discovered in various locations here, including a single species, *Megalonyx jeffersonii*, in Yukon.

Life-sized restoration of *Megalonyx jeffersonii* in life, at the Iowa Museum of Natural History (© Bill Whittaker/Wikipedia)



So in terms of zoogeography alone, a Yukon ground sloth is already known, but obviously a living one is another matter entirely – as is the saytoechin's apparent dietary proclivity for beavers. This is because according to traditional palaeontological belief, all forms of terrestrial non-aquatic ground sloth were exclusively herbivorous. Having said that: in 1996, Drs Richard Fariña and Ernesto Blanco from the Universidad de la República in Montevideo, Uruguay, published a thought-provoking if controversial paper in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, in which they proposed that *Megatherium* could have used its fearsome claws to overturn, stab, and kill glyptodonts as prey.

From analysing a *Megatherium* skeleton, Fariña and Blanco discovered that its olecranon (the elbow portion to which the triceps muscle attaches) was very short. This adaptation is found in carnivores, and optimises speed rather than strength. These researchers opined that this would have enabled *Megatherium* to use its claws like daggers, and they suggested that it may have commandeered kills made by the sabre-tooth *Smilodon* in order to add nutrients to its diet (such behaviour is known as kleptoparasitic). Moreover, based upon the estimated strength and mechanical advantage of its biceps, they proposed that *Megatherium* could have overturned adult glyptodonts as a means of scavenging or hunting them.

However, this proposal has not gained widespread acceptance. In particular, palaeontologist Dr Paul S. Martin considers it "fanciful", noting that in terms of their dentition, ground sloths lack the carnassials that characterise predators, and that to suggest even that they were scavengers (let alone predators) is a reach. In addition, ground sloth dung deposits studied by him in Arizona's Grand Canyon and also in caves in Nevada, New Mexico, and western Texas contained no traces of bone. So far, therefore, at least as far as the palaeontological world is concerned, the case for carnivorous ground sloths in the past (not to mention in the present) has yet to be convincingly made.



Exquisite vintage illustration of *Megatherium*, from *Extinct Monsters - A Popular Account of Some of the Larger Forms of Ancient Animal Life*, 4th ed., 1896, Reverend H.N. Hutchinson (public domain)

As for the saytoechin: as discussed by Canadian cryptozoologist Sebastian Wang in a *BCSCC Newsletter* article (fall 2006) documenting this little-known cryptid, although the Native Americans

selected a ground sloth from a book of extinct mammals as resembling it there is little else that actually links the two creatures directly. Other, less dramatic identities for it include an unusually large grizzly bear or black bear, plus some cryptozoological ones, such as a bigfoot, or even a surviving short-faced bear *Arctodus* or giant beaver *Castoroides*, although

the idea of a giant beaver habitually preying upon normal beavers does not seem very likely. As far as I am aware, no specific search has ever been made for the mystifying Yukon beaver eater, so it is surely time for someone to rectify this oversight.

GROUNDS SLOTHS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN NEW ZEALAND?!

It was cryptozoological archivist Richard Muirhead who kindly brought to my attention what must surely be the most unexpected claim ever made regarding alleged living ground sloths, which can be found in British retired submarine officer Gavin Menzies's book *1421: The Year China Discovered the World* (2002). In it, he claims that from 1421 to 1423, during China's Ming dynasty under the Yongle Emperor, the fleets of Admiral Zheng He, commanded by the captains Zhou Wen, Zhou Man, Yang Qing, and Hong Bao, discovered the Northeast Passage, the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, and Antarctica; circumnavigated Greenland; attempted to reach the North and South Poles; and circumnavigated the world a century before before Ferdinand Magellan carried out the first officially-recognised circumnavigation. Not too surprisingly, mainstream historians do not agree with his claims, but such matters lie outside the scope of this present book of mine.



Megatherium statue in Bautzen, Germany (© Frank Vincentz/Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0 licence)

What does lie within its scope, however, is Menzies's suggestion in his own book that on one of their ships the Chinese took aboard some mylodontids captured in Patagonia but that upon reaching New Zealand in c.1421 a pair escaped when the ship was wrecked in Dusky Sound in Fjordland at the southwestern tip of South Island. Moreover, in 1831 a ship from Sydney, Australia, visited Dusky Sound, where two sailors from the ship saw an animal that according to Menzies fitted the description of a ground sloth.

If so, this would indicate that the escaped mylodontids from the 1400s had not only survived in New Zealand but must also have established a population that was still in existence there four centuries later – always assuming of course that the beast seen was indeed a ground sloth, which is a massive assumption to say the least, and even more so when an independent source of information concerning this latter cryptid is examined (see below). Also, the wrecked ship was not Chinese, but an English vessel called the *Endeavour*, and was wrecked in 1795, not 1421.

A mylodontid depicted on a postage stamp issued by Cambodia in 1994 (public domain)

Further information concerning this very strange state of affairs was presented in Robyn Jenkin's fascinating book *New Zealand Mysteries* (1970), which contained the following detailed account of the sailors' mystery beast sighting:



Even more bizarre was a story, also reported to the Collector of Customs in Sydney when the *Sydney Packet* returned home in 1831. One of the ship's gangs which had been stationed at Dusky Sound told of the discovery of an enormous animal of the kangaroo species.

The men had been boating in a cove in some quiet part of the inlet where the rocks shelved from the water's edge up to the bushline. Looking up they saw a strange animal perching at the edge of the bush nibbling the foliage. It stood on its hind legs, the lower part of its body curving into a thick pointed tail, and when they took note of the height it reached against the trees, allowing five feet for the tail, they estimated it stood nearly thirty feet in height!

The men were to windward of the animal and were able to watch it feeding for some time before it spotted them. They watched it pull down a heavy branch with comparative ease, turn it over and tilt it up to reach the leaves it wanted. When it finally saw them, the animal stood watching the men for a short time, then made one almighty leap from the edge of the bush towards the water's edge. There it landed on all fours but immediately stood erect before making another great leap into the water. The men were able to measure the first jump and found it covered twenty yards. They watched the animal plough its way down the Sound at tremendous speed, its wake extending from one side of the Sound to the other.

Here again one is tempted to think the rum was talking, and for an Australian going away from home for months on end, what other animal would stir the imagination but a kangaroo? But how much more romantic to think that perhaps they really had seen some prehistoric animal living out its days in the remote fastnesses of the West Coast Sounds.

Romantic it may be, but the mundane reality is that no ground sloth is suspected to have behaved in the highly dramatic manner ascribed to the creature described above, or to have attained its colossal dimensions, which even dwarf those of the mighty *Megatherium*. In any case, as no comparable accounts appear to have been filed in this dual-island country since that one, it is surely safe to say that if a living ground sloth is indeed discovered one day, it will not be anywhere in New Zealand!

My late mother, Mary Shuker, alongside a life-sized *Megatherium* statue by Victorian sculptor Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins in London's Crystal Palace Park, photographed in 2010 (© Dr Karl Shuker)

My sincere thanks to Sebastian Wang for making available to me his detailed *BCSCC Newsletter* article on the Yukon beaver eater, and to Richard Muirhead for bringing to my attention the remarkable history of New Zealand's alleged ground sloths.



This ShukerNature article is excerpted from my forthcoming book, ***Still In Search Of Prehistoric Survivors.***



19th-Century engraving depicting the creation of the Crystal Palace *Megatherium* (public domain)

Dr Karl Shuker at 20:11

No comments:

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Tiny island deer in Panama hunted to extinction thousands of years ago

Thu, 03 Mar 2016 05:00:00 GMT

eurekalert.org

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AAAS Logo

Public Release: 3-Mar-2016

Tiny island deer in Panama hunted to extinction thousands of years ago

Smithsonian Tropical

Research Institute



IMAGE: Bones of dwarf deer show butchering marks. Archaeologists on Pedro González Island in the Bay of Panama were surprised to find bones of a dwarf deer in a 6,000-year-old waste... view more Credit: STRI

As polar ice caps melted at the end of the last Ice Age about 8,500 years ago, the global sea level rose and Panama's Pearl Islands were isolated from the mainland. A new archaeological study by a team including a Smithsonian scientist shows that several thousand years later pre-Columbian colonists hunted a dwarf deer to extinction on an island called Pedro González.

The settlers arrived on the 14-hectare island by sea 6,200 years ago and stayed for a maximum of eight centuries, farming maize and roots, fishing, gathering palm fruits and shellfish and hunting deer, opossums, agoutis, iguanas and large snakes--the major predators.

"When I was washing the animal bones from the first test cut in 2008, out fell a deer ankle bone called a calcaneum," said Richard Cooke, archaeologist at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and co-author of the study. "It was so tiny that I realized we had come across a population that had probably dwarfed through isolation."

The Pearl Archipelago, named for rich pearl beds encountered by early Spanish explorers, lies about 16 miles off Panama's Pacific coast. The islands are perhaps best known as the location of several seasons of the TV series, *Survivor*. As Darwin discovered in the Galapagos, islands are hotbeds of evolution. Through time, animals isolated from mainland populations commonly undergo a reduction in size compared to their mainland relatives due to competition for limited food resources. In the case of the dwarf deer, this must have occurred between the time when the island was isolated from the mainland and the time when the settlers arrived.

Adult deer living on Pedro González island 6,000 years ago weighed less than 22 pounds, about as much as a beagle. Collagen fingerprint studies by Manchester University biochemist Mike Buckley infer that deer bones on the island were not from the tiny red brocket deer, corzo in Spanish, found in Panama today. Deer bones on the island represent a different group of deer, which includes white-tailed deer and some gray brocket populations found in South America. Only DNA studies will confirm to which deer clade the island deer belong. Buckley found that the 6,000-year-old deer bones belong to the same lineage as a larger deer still found on San José island, 5 miles to the south in the Pearl Archipelago. Why it survived there is an unresolved mystery.

About 2,500 fragments of deer bones corresponding to 22 individuals were found in the 4-meter-deep trash heap (midden) that built up in a large hollow near the coast. Some deer bones had cuts indicating butchering, such as disarticulation and slicing meat from the bone, or had the marks of human teeth. Others had been burned or smashed to get at the marrow. Antlers and long bones were often cut for making everyday tools and ornaments. Hunting appears to have been indiscriminate, including adults as well as juveniles.

The number of deer bones decreased in the youngest layer of the midden, and those of older adults were absent, suggesting that the species was becoming scarcer and life expectancies lower. No deer bones were found in later layers left by pottery-using people after 2,300 years ago, indicating that the species had become extinct on Pedro González by then.

The history of this tiny deer illustrates just how vulnerable island species can be. The loss of the Pedro González dwarf deer may inspire conservation of the population still found on the neighboring island.

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, headquartered in Panama City, Panama, is a part of the Smithsonian Institution. The Institute furthers the understanding of tropical nature and its importance to human welfare, trains students to conduct research in the tropics and promotes conservation by increasing public awareness of the beauty and importance of tropical ecosystems. Website: <http://www.stri.si.edu>.

Martínez-Polanco, María Fernanda, Máximo Jiménez, Mike Buckley and Richard G. Cooke. 2015. Impactos humanos tempranos en fauna insular: El caso de los venados enanos de Pedro González (Archipiélago de las Perlas, Panamá). *Arqueobios* 1 (9): 202-214.

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Tracking Down the Truth of What Happened to the Donner Party

May 11, 1986
ANN JAPENGA
Times Staff Writer

TRUCKEE, Calif. — O Mary I have not rote you half of the truble we have had but I have rote you anuf to let you now that you dont now what truble is but thank god we have all got throw and the only family that did not eat human flesh.

--Donner party survivor Patty Reed, 12,

writing to her cousin in 1847.

At about the age when children are most attracted to scary stories, they're apt to hear one in fourth-grade history class that tops anything whispered at a slumber party or summer camp.

It's the saga of a band of 82 emigrants reduced to cannibalism when they were trapped at Donner Lake by a 22-foot snowfall in the winter of 1846-47.

While some tales lose their power to captivate over time, people can't seem to forget the Donner party, which set out from Springfield, Ill., 140 years ago last month on what should have been a demanding but routine trip west. The episode, which has been called the most spectacular disaster in the history of Western migration, continues to captivate researchers, descendants of party members and amateur collectors of Donnerana who spend their free time exploring the mysteries and controversy that still surround the event.

"There are so many questions that remain to be answered," said Susan Lindstrom, an archeologist who recently aided an excavation at the site of a Donner party cabin.

Some of the questions are not isolated to the Donner situation, but have applications for families and individuals in crisis today, Lindstrom said. For instance, "What happens to people in the necessity of the moment? And at what point does the culture we think inbred in us break down?"

There's a card file at Donner Memorial State Park in Truckee that contains names of people who have visited the park claiming to be descendants of Donner party members. The 45 survivors (32 were children) and their descendants settled in San Juan Bautista, Hollister, San Rafael and other Northern and Southern California communities.

"Once in a while they (Donner descendants) come through and make a little remark, but generally they don't have much to say," supervising ranger Warren Beers said. He explained that these visitors could still be stung by early exaggerated accounts of the tragedy, which had caused many of their ancestors to deny being Donner party members. "It (the tragedy) didn't happen that long ago," Beers said.

New developments may relieve Donner descendants from some of the lingering stigma of the episode.

Nona McGlashan, granddaughter of C. F. McGlashan, the newspaperman who was the first to interview

the Donner party survivors, is currently editing 450 hand-written letters from 24 Donner party survivors describing events at Donner Lake during that grim winter. The correspondence, discovered recently among C. F. McGlashan's legal papers, was long thought either to have been burned along with the reporter's home in Truckee, or destroyed by him out of respect for the secrets of Donner party members.

Excavation of the Breen cabin site is also shedding light on exactly what went on in the lake-side camp. In a project funded by the National Geographic Society, Lindstrom and researchers from the University of Nevada attempted last summer to locate the human remains that were supposedly burned and buried by a horseback party led by Gen. Stephen Watts Kearny in June, 1847. Kearny reported that the campsite looked like the grisly aftermath of a massacre when he arrived. He said that he and his men tidied up the area to protect the sensibilities of future travelers.

The excavators did uncover a pit in the spot Kearny specified, but they found only a small amount of charred and crushed bone. They won't know until chemical tests are complete whether the bones are human or animal, Lindstrom said, but in any case, "There was not enough (human remains found) to jibe with Gen. Kearny's story about cleaning up the whole area. We substantiated that Gen. Kearny did not do what he said he did in his journals."

This discovery could give credence to the argument of some Donner party descendants that cannibalism was not as big a part of the story as most people believe. Lindstrom said, "We might find out that things weren't so sensational as early reports said, or things could have been even more terrible than we imagined."

Mary Tamsen Newlin is the great-great-granddaughter of Donner party leader George Donner. A 71-year-old retired schoolteacher living in Santa Barbara, Newlin has had a lifelong curiosity about her namesake, Tamsen Donner.

Tamsen Donner was the third wife of 62-year-old George Donner (Mary Newlin is descended from Donner's first wife), a well-to-do farmer from Springfield, Ill. "When she reached California, Tamsen wanted to open a girls' school," Newlin said. "She came from a very fine background. She must have been a very ladylike person."

After several snowbound months in the Sierra, Tamsen Donner had a terrible decision to make: would she remain at camp with her dying husband--a choice that would mean certain death for herself--or leave the mountains with her children and rescuers? She opted to send her children on alone, destined to be orphans in a new land.

Tamsen Donner died at Donner Lake, following the death of her husband. The lone survivor at the camp, Lewis Keseberg, later confessed to cannibalizing her body. Newlin is proud to be associated with the valiant Tamsen Donner, but she doesn't want to be linked through her ancestors to cannibalism.

"I think there were a lot of things told that maybe weren't true," Newlin said. "Maybe there was cannibalism, but I know my people didn't take part." (Nona McGlashan said that although Tamsen and George Donner probably did not eat human flesh, the Donner children almost certainly would have had to partake of human nourishment--whether they were told what they were eating or not--in order to survive the journey down the mountain.)

The Sweetest Morsel

When the final rescue party arrived at the Donner camp in April, 1847, Lewis Keseberg was the only survivor. Because Tamsen Donner had appeared quite healthy to an earlier rescue team, Keseberg was accused of murdering the Donner woman. Stories would later circulate that Keseberg bragged about eating flesh, and told barroom cronies in Sacramento that human liver--and specifically Tamsen Donner's--was the sweetest morsel he'd ever tasted.

Keseberg has since become the most talked-about member of the Donner party. A favorite debate of Donner buffs is: Did Lewis Keseberg murder Tamsen Donner?

"In my personal opinion, Keseberg was guilty," said Pat Armitage, a ranger at Donner Memorial State Park. "Self-righteous Keseberg did Tamsen in."

When C. F. McGlashan was writing his "History of the Donner Party: A Tragedy of the Sierra" (published in 1880, and still the definitive historical account of the incident), he was determined to use his interrogative powers to drag the truth out of Keseberg. As well as being a newspaperman, butterfly collector and astronomer, McGlashan was also a prominent defense attorney.

McGlashan tracked down Keseberg, who was then living near Sacramento. Six feet tall, with a full beard, high forehead and direct blue eyes, Keseberg was afflicted by "misery and desolation," McGlashan wrote. Keseberg was widowed, poverty-stricken and caring as best he could for his two mentally retarded daughters. He was tormented by accusations that he was an inhuman cannibal.

Dropped to His Knees

After witnessing Keseberg's plea of innocence, McGlashan arranged a meeting between Eliza Donner Houghton--the youngest surviving child of Tamsen Donner--and the accused killer of her mother. Keseberg dropped to his knees before Eliza, who was only 4 when she was rescued. Now an adult, Eliza bid Keseberg to stand and place his hands between hers. Looking her in the eyes, Keseberg swore he had not murdered her mother, although he did not deny he had eaten her remains after she died of starvation.

Eliza Donner Houghton believed him; many people today do not, and continue to regard Keseberg as evil personified.

Ranger Warren Beers said that Keseberg's descendants changed the family name when they settled in the Napa area. It's a rare occasion when a Keseberg descendant visits the Donner Monument, and there is only one person--a Seal Beach woman--claiming to be related to Keseberg on file at the park.

More than 100 years after her grandfather worked to clear the names of the Donner party survivors, Nona McGlashan, 75, is determined to further vindicate party members through her research and writing. Even Keseberg, whom she describes as "a pitiful character," was unfairly abused by public opinion, she said.

Nona McGlashan said: "Papa (her grandfather) was the first one to say to the world: 'Don't judge. What would you do if you were starving?'"

Ranger Pat Armitage recently led a group of 10 amateur historians on a snowshoe walk billed as a

reenactment of the Donner party escape attempt.

Swaddled in Goretex, down and pile-lined boots, the snowshoers left their cars at the end of a plowed road and began trudging up a snow-covered grade at the western end of Donner Lake (the state park is located at the eastern edge of the lake where the emigrant band wintered). A dense snow was falling. The snowshoes were cumbersome, and people spent a lot of time tripping over the shoes, or readjusting the laces.

One man, engineer Greg LaFramboise, carried his 2 1/2-year-old son, Aaron, on his back. LaFramboise and his wife, Glenda, of Oakley, Calif., said they ventured out in the storm because they wanted to understand more about the Donner party's hardships than they could learn in books.

"I've always wanted to know what it was really like," Glenda LaFramboise said.

Armitage pointed out to the group that by the time the Donner escape party began trudging up this same path toward what is now Donner Summit, they had been starving for months. "And by the time they got here (to the place the snowshoers stood), they didn't like each other very much," Armitage added.

Taking a Shortcut

Bickering erupted among the Donner party several months into their journey when the leaders agreed to split off from the main westward route to try a little-traveled shortcut proposed by Lansford Hastings, author of the "Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California."

It soon became clear that choosing the cutoff was the fatal decision. (Young Patty Reed would survive the horrid winter only to advise her friends in the East: "Never take no cutoffs and hurry along as fast as you can.")

By the time the Donner party came to Truckee Meadows, where Reno is today, they were physically and emotionally depleted by the hardships of a long, dry desert crossing, and from building roads through the mountains when the promised trail turned out to be non-existent.

The party looked up at the Sierra and saw snow. There was nothing to go back to but starvation, thirst and Indian attacks on their weakened party. Ahead, just over the mountains, lay Sutter's Fort and the mild, hospitable climate of the Sacramento Valley.

The party started the climb up the pass, but was stalled by a snowstorm at Donner Lake on Oct. 28. One family took over an abandoned cabin. The others quickly built primitive lean-tos. Their supplies were nearly gone. What few oxen had survived the trip died standing up and were quickly covered by the snow that continued to fall.

Six weeks after they were trapped at the lake, the 10 men and five women who were still strong enough to walk left camp on snowshoes fashioned of oxbows and rawhide strips. Among them were two Indian guides who were traveling with the Donner party. Thirty-three days later, the two men and five women who had survived the journey reached a Sacramento Valley ranch where they found food and safety.

'Ordeal by Hunger'

George Stewart described the breakdown of taboos during this escape attempt in his 1936 account, "Ordeal by Hunger":

. . . the snowshoers had degenerated step by step from the level of civilized men and women. At first they had waited for a comrade who fell behind, and had flinched at drawing lots to see who should die, and had shrunk from cannibalism, even when it meant eating only a man already dead. Then they had eaten the food which centuries of civilization had forbidden them. Then as the mania of starvation worked upon them, they had plotted to kill men of another race (the Indian guides), and then men or even women of their own race.

Back at camp, the starving families were boiling old hides and bones that had previously been tossed to the dogs. There was little communication among the three cabins; each reeked of unwashed bodies, babies, sickness and death. In the Murphy cabin, desperate men and women began to cut up and toast bits of the hearth rug. Cash, the Reed children's pet dog, was cooked and devoured.

By the time a relief party arrived at the Donner campsite in March, rescuers found evidence that this group too had resorted to cannibalism. The rescuers noted dismembered bodies, bodies with flesh stripped from the arms and legs, and a carcass with the heart and liver cut out.

When the escape party reenactment group reached the top of a long snowy grade on a recent afternoon, the snow flurries abated and the sun came out, revealing Donner Lake below, and trucks passing on Highway 80, which follows the lake-shore. A trio of cross-country skiers took advantage of the path the snowshoes had packed and came down the Donner trail, poling and grinning.

The snowshoers parted ways back at the trail head. The LaFramboises got a sled out of their car and went off to play in the snow with their son.

It was nearly impossible for most of the snowshoers, who live in cities at lower elevations, to imagine the desolation of the area when the Donner party was there. Within a few minutes' drive from the lake, there are a major highway, hotels, restaurants and convenience stores. Many of the local businesses have taken on the name of the famous emigrant party--there's a Donner mobile home park, Chevron station, mortgage company and propane supplier.

But for those who live through the harsh winters in Truckee, where Highway 80 still sometimes closes down due to snow accumulation, the travails of the Donner party don't seem so far away.

"It (the memory of the Donner party) is always there for us, particularly during the bitter weather," said Minka Scott Friedman, a Truckee writer who joined the snowshoers on the escape reenactment.

"People turn to each other and say: 'This is what the Donner party faced.' "

Links:

http://articles.latimes.com/1986-05-11/news/vw-5740_1_donner-party
http://articles.latimes.com/1986-05-11/news/vw-5740_1_donner-party/2
http://articles.latimes.com/1986-05-11/news/vw-5740_1_donner-party/3

Mexican restaurant worker 'killed in satanic ritual to turn him into a vampire'

14:44, 7 Mar 2016 Updated 16:12, 7 Mar 2016 By Gerard Couzens, Rachel Bishop

mirror.co.uk



Mirror email
alerts

Trio 'tried to turn their friend into a vampire in satanic killing' at cafe called Freak Shop



Chihuahua Attorney General's Office

Victim: Edwin Juarez Palma was killed in Mexico, allegedly during a ritual to turn him into a vampire

Three people have been accused of killing a friend they were trying to turn into a vampire during a satanic ceremony.

The trio have been arrested under suspicion

of carrying out the sickening attack against 24-year-old Edwin Juarez Palma at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.

The restaurant worker died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle near the regional congress building in the northern Chihuahua.

A teenage girl, 18-year-old student Iveth Lopez, is among those being held. The other two suspects were named as Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25.

They face up to 40 years in prison if found guilty.



Three suspects are being held in connection with the murder of Edwin Juarez Palma

Arrested: Three suspects are being held in connection with the murder of Edwin Juarez Palma

Police say Edwin, known as Piwa, was killed after being fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony to become part of a satanic cult called the Sons of Baphomet 1.

Instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers persuaded the others their victim should be sacrificed so he could return to life as a vampire.

Read more: Police arrest "voodoo" couple who performed bizarre love ritual in cemetery with "bones from corpse"

Police were alerted last Tuesday after his body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder off as a drugs-related crime.

Officers found traces of the victim's blood inside the cyber cafe, which belongs to the older of the two men being held, after obtaining a search warrant when a protected witness told them how Edwin had been killed.

The murder reportedly took place inside the toilets late at night and the killers are said to have used bleach to try to clean up the scene of the crime.

A fourth person described as the leader of the sect is on the run from police.

Police announced the arrests yesterday as they revealed details of the horrific crime.

Police chief Pablo Rocha said: "This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire.

"All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we have."

Edwin's sister Alicia, writing on social media sites after his funeral, said in a message to friends and relatives: "Don't be sad. I know it hurts that he's no longer with us. He's my brother and we are his family and it hurts us more than anyone.

"But we have something that comforts us. He always had words for us when we felt down, words of encouragement.

"I know as his sister that he wouldn't have wanted us to be sad about his departure."

Staff at the cafe where he worked, Cafe 340 in Chihuahua, placed a black ribbon on the facade as a mark of respect.

One said: "He was an honest person who always tried to keep out of trouble. His interest in vampires was a hobby and nothing more."

A local paper identified Iveth Lopez, the brunette arrested over Edwin's murder, as a Facebook user who used the fake name Eleonor Malina and described herself as a trainee police officer.

The teenager used to use as her cover photo a heart with the message: "In a relationship with Satan" and published a series of satanic photos including several relating to the Nazis.

Her current cover photo is a disturbing modified version of Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper painting with the twelve disciples covered in blood and a satanic-like figure in Jesus'

place standing over his corpse laid out on the table.

An acquaintance wrote on Facebook along a picture taken from her fake profile: "You are a piece of rubbish, a ball of manure.

"I don't have words to describe something like you because calling you a person would be too much.

"This awful thing who calls herself as a Nazi was responsible for Piwa's murder, her and two others who are going to rot in jail."

Comments

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Trio suspected of killing friend in satanic ritual to turn him into vampire

torontosun.com



Trio suspected of killing friend in satanic ritual to turn him into vampire

Postmedia Network

First posted: Monday, March 07, 2016 04:37 PM EST | Updated: Monday, March 07, 2016 05:16 PM EST

Two men and a woman have been arrested in Mexico for killing a man in a bizarre attempt to turn him into a vampire.

According to local reports, Edwin Miguel Juarez Palma, 24, was strangled, beaten and stabbed in the neck with a broken bottle in Chihuahua. His body was found in plastic bags in the city centre.

Police say Palma was possibly lured into taking part of a initiation ceremony to become a member of a satanic cult called Sons of Baphomet.

"The (alleged killers) believed the satanic ritual would resurrect the victim as a vampire," Pablo Rocha Acosta, the director general of the state police, told Mexican newspaper Excelsior, adding the murder is another example of "the social breakdown we have today."

Iveth Nayeli Lopez Hernandez, an 18-year-old student was charged with murder as were Omar Sanchez Garcia, 25, and Gustavo Adolfo Dorantes Dorante, 18, who both worked at a cyber cafe called Freak Shop.

A trace of Palma's blood was reportedly found in the cafe, where police believe the murder occurred.

Staff at a restaurant where Palma worked as a waiter said he was a good man who kept out of trouble, and was interested in vampires -- but only as a hobby.

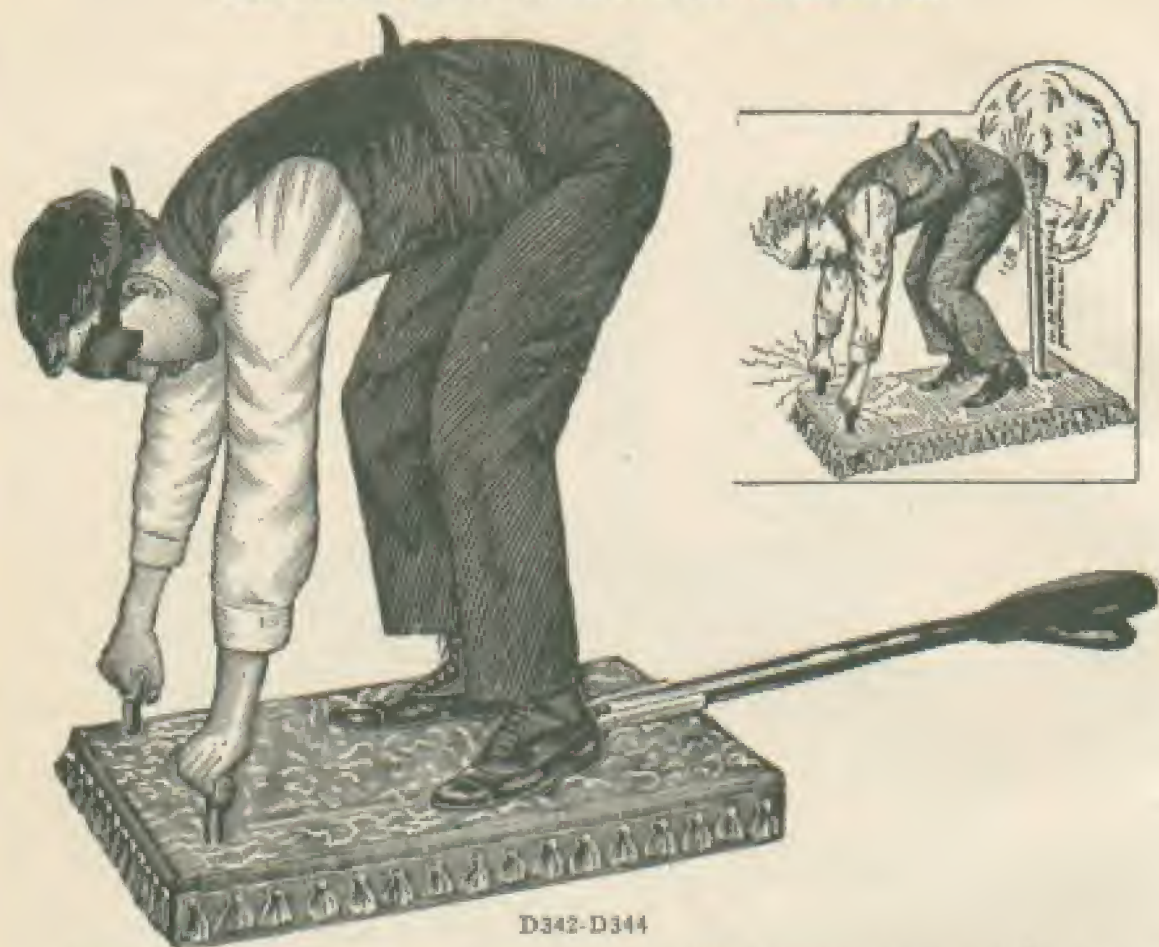


POSTMEDIA

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D342-D344

With this machine the candidate cannot kick his own pants while wearing them, but can have them spanked where his mother used to apply the sole of her slipper, by simply testing his strength. The position in which he places himself causes a little strain in the seat of his pants, which is not objectionable, as it pulls up all the slack when he pulls up on the handles. Just about the time he gets well started lifting, a trigger is automatically released, which causes the spanking paddle to spring into place and strike him on the kazabo, at the same time exploding a 32-calibre blank cartridge with a loud report. (Paddle can be easily removed and used as a spanker.) That is not all; there is also an electric attachment concealed under the platform of the machine that turns on a good current of electricity at the same time the paddle hits his pants.

See suggestions for introducing, page XIX in pack of catalog.

Great improvements have been made in the electrical parts of this machine. We now use a special coil with dry batteries, which is almost impossible to get out of order. Each machine is guaranteed to give a good strong electric current, and will not get out of order, except for the occasional replacing of dry batteries. (Weight, packed, 55 pounds.)

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- | | |
|---|---------|
| D342—Lifting and Spanking Machine, with 50 blank cartridges | \$32.50 |
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I Spelled Marriage—"M-I-R-A-G-E"



Listen to this
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happiness rediscovered

I married for love . . . and at first George *did* love me. Then—I can't explain when or how it began—George became more and more indifferent. Our marriage happiness began to fade away like a mirage.

I brooded so that I actually became ill. When I went to see my doctor, I started to cry and told him everything. It was then I learned how "one neglect"—carelessness or ignorance about feminine hygiene—so often wrecks romance!



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Types of American Folk Magic From New Orleans to the Ozarks

Updated on February 19, 2014

2 years ago from The US of A, but I'm Open to Suggestions Level 2 Commenter

hubpages.com



American folk magic spans the entire countryside...its roots dating back centuries and still surviving today.

American folk magic spans the entire countryside...its roots dating back centuries and still surviving today.

What is American Folk Magic?

Folk magic is a term that is used to describe a set of magical practices that is usually practiced by "common folk" or country dwellers, to put it simply. Sometimes folk magic incorporates religious practices and beliefs, and sometimes it has its own set of traditions. Folk magic is a practice that can be found in almost every country, in almost every culture, all over the world. The United

States of America is no exception to this rule. American folk magic comes in all shapes and sizes, and it can be found in every region of the U.S.

From the Ozark Mountains to the Appalachians, from New York to New Orleans, American Folk Magic is woven into our unique American culture. A melting pot of superstitions, energy, and spiritual will...as our ancestors moved to the United States we began intertwining practices from various countries and origins, including the Native American people who already lived and practiced on this land. Learn about the main types of American Folk Magic and some interesting facts behind each.



An historical house in the Appalachians. A prime example of how people in the Appalachians lived in the early 20th century.

An historical house in the Appalachians. A prime example of how people in the Appalachians lived in the early 20th century.

Appalachian Granny Magic

Up until recent years, this form of American Folk Magic didn't necessarily have a name...it just was. **Today we call it Appalachian Granny Magic because:**

A. it came from the Appalachian Mountain Region

and

B. it was well known that old housewives (grannies) practiced these beliefs and traditions.

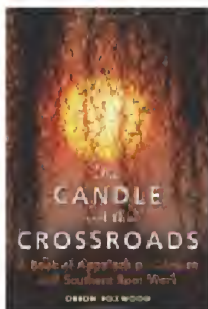
Some sources claim this form of American Folk Magic is a mixture of Irish, Scottish, and Native practices, but that would mean we would be excluding the other cultures who have lived in the Appalachians for centuries. That would mean we would be excluding the rich traditions of the German and English immigrants, and let's not forget that African Americans have also dwelt in the Appalachian region since the 18th century. Italian and Welsh immigrants were also known to have flourished in the Appalachian region, particularly prior to the Great Depression.

To put it simply, Appalachian Granny Magic is a very big blend of superstitions and magical practices that have been passed down from generation to generation of people living in the Appalachian Mountain range. Much of granny's magic involved everyday household items and chores and were not elaborate rituals but very practical routines. For example, they would hang a horseshoe over their doorway to prevent evil spirits from entering. This practice most likely comes from the Irish immigrants, as they believed iron and other metals would ward off mischievous spirits and faeries. Another way to keep spirits at bay in the Appalachians was to sprinkle salt over the hearth fire or wear a rabbit's foot. To this day many people all over the U.S. will carry a rabbit's foot on a keychain for good luck.

Healing ailments was a big practice in Appalachian Granny Magic. Most of the families and individuals living in the Appalachian Mountain range were not rich folk, so doctors were not common. The next best thing was to consult the local "granny" or midwife in order to acquire a healing remedy. Herbs from the garden, alcohol, and other household items were used in granny's healing magic, including:

- to cure a headache, place a bit of salt on your head
- to numb a baby's mouth during teething rub the gumline with whiskey/rum
- sassafras root tea was brewed to cure scurvy (this is believed to have come from the Natives' healing traditions)
- shrub yellowroot was an herb used as a remedy for stomach and liver ailments
- put a knife under a pregnant woman's bed to "cut the pain" of childbirth

Some of what we call "old wives' tales" originated in Appalachian Granny Magic. This type of American folk magic lives on today in the Appalachians and throughout the country in various ways.



The Candle and the Crossroads: A Book of Appalachian Conjure and

The Candle and the Crossroads: A Book of Appalachian Conjure and Southern Root-Work

Candles are used in many Hoodoo workings for various reasons.

Hoodoo

Perhaps the most well-known form of American folk magic originated with the African slaves in Colonial times and is called Hoodoo. There are other names for it such as *root-work* and *conjure*. Hoodoo is a magical practice that stemmed from a mixture of African and Native American supernatural traditions; however, it is NOT the same thing as Voodoo. Voodoo is a religion, not a magical practice; whereas, hoodoo is a magical practice and not really a

Southern Root-Work



Candles are used in many Hoodoo workings for various reasons.

religion. Hopefully that clarifies the two a bit for those who might be wondering. **The American folk magic practice of Hoodoo has its roots in the Deep South of the U.S. - from New Orleans to Alabama, from Mississippi to Georgia (and everywhere in between).**

Now you might be thinking, how about voodoo dolls? In fact, "voodoo" dolls would be more appropriately termed "hoodoo" dolls; that being said, most hoodoo practitioners do not use dolls as a mainstay in their magical practices. Some of the tools used in Hoodoo include but aren't limited to: herbs, roots, stones, powders, coins, and everyday household items. The "mojo bag" is

originally a hoodoo practice of adding contents to a bag that are meant for a certain purpose. Then the practitioner would "feed" the spirits in the bag with oils, liquor, herbs, whatever they had on hand in order to increase the power behind the spell.

Hoodoo was used by African slaves and others in the Deep South in order to gain power over a bad situation and even for everyday needs such as drawing in money or keeping a lover faithful. I.E. putting "hot foot powder" in an enemy's shoes to send them away for good. Dusting powdered brick over the front door threshold to protect the home from any negative spirits/people from entering. And sometimes "war water" was used to send an enemy away...indefinitely. These powders and waters were constructed of some sort of solvent and infused with various materials such as roots, herbs, powders, oils, etc. This practice has survived and is still used by some today in the Deep South and elsewhere in the U.S. and throughout some places in the world.

Hoodoo Roots



Map Data

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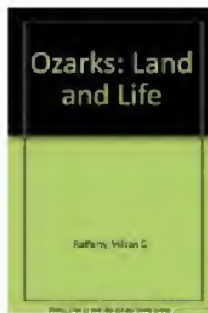


Ozark households might lay a broomstick across the front doorstep to ward witches off. The Ozarks: Land and Life

Ozark

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broomstick
across the front
doorstep to
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One of the
richest and
most
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of the
American



The Ozarks: Land
and Life

Folk Magic traditions is Ozark Folk Magic. This is a tradition of folk magic circulating the Ozark Mountains, which pervade a large amount of the landscape from Missouri through northern Arkansas. The people who live and have lived in the Ozarks come from much of the same line of ancestors as the Appalachian folk. These include cultures of Scottish, Irish, Native American, and some German descent. So we could assume that Ozark Folk Magic is very similar to Appalachian Granny Magic. We could assume...but we would only be partially correct.

Ozark Folk Magic does share quite a few similarities with Appalachian Granny Magic but they are by no means the same thing. Similarities would include using everyday household items in magical practice, as well as similar superstitions.

Some bits of Ozark Folk Magic:

- It was said that if the salt on the table spilled, a quarrel among family members would happen before the day was through
- If you drop your comb, step on it as it could mean bad luck
- Don't pick up a black button if you find it in your path, it means someone is trying to curse you
- Women in the Ozarks would read lines and patterns in egg shells in order to tell the future
- Be careful going out at night as you might run into a shapeshifter witch called the "booger dog"
- Draw a cross in the dust outside of your home to protect you and your home

Most of what we call the Ozark Folk Magic would seem like silly superstition to outsiders, but if you were to be born and raised in the Ozark Mountains you would realize how deep these beliefs are rooted in the culture.

Magical Things in American Folk Magic

AppalachianHoodooOzarkPow-wow

Pow-wow Folk Magic (Pennsylvania Dutch)

Pow-wow Folk Magic (also known as Braucherei in Deutsch) is a type of American Folk Magic prominent amongst the Pennsylvania Dutch people. These were a group of German immigrants who lived in Pennsylvania beginning in the late seventeenth century. Only a part of this cultural group actually practiced pow-wow magic, but this form of folk magic is now widespread due to its decorative hex signs.



Close-up of a hex sign on public building in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Another example of a Pennsylvania Dutch talisman.



Close-up of a hex sign on public building in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Another example of a Pennsylvania Dutch talisman.

Pow-wow magic is believed to have originated in the nineteenth century, and is based off of a book by John George Hohman called Pow-wows. To put it lightly, this book is a

detailed grimoire of European spells, incantations, and charms used to heal ailments and to perform other

types of magic. A large part of pow-wow folk magic is rooted in Christianity. No "pow-wow" practitioner would be seen without his or her Holy Bible. They believe that words have power, and that they can quote passages from the Bible in order to magically heal people or livestock. They also use words as a means of protection. In addition to their strong affinity for words and passages, they also use symbols as talismans of sorts. These symbols are most often referred to as "hex signs" and can be seen on the sides of barns in Pennsylvania to this day (see picture below). Hex signs were not necessarily signs used to curse people, but were actually symbols of power that were thought to protect the livestock inside of the barn or the people inside of a home from lightning strikes or thieves. Other symbols and talismans were used for other purposes such as keeping peace in a household or protecting the family from disease, etc.

In addition to hex signs and holy bibles, the pow-wow practitioners also used the Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses as well as a few other magical and/or religious texts. Some people believe that pow-wowers also mixed in a religion known as Urglaawe, which is a form of pagan Germanic beliefs in old gods and traditions from pre-Christian times. It is intriguing to see how Christianity and pagan beliefs can mix and form a folk magic tradition all their own. Is pow-wow magic still alive and kicking today? I couldn't tell you for sure, though some people claim to be practitioners of it.



A barn in Berks County, Pennsylvania clearly

adorned with Hex Signs.

© 2014 Nicole Canfield

12 comments

kittythedreamer 5 hours ago from the Hearthfire Hub
Author

Bishop55 - Thanks so much! I doubt the grannies and women who practice these things label it in any

adorned with Hex Signs.



Shapeshifting Witches: Legends from Europe and North America



certain term. But it exists nevertheless.

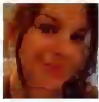
JMcFarland - Thanks so much!



RJ

Schwartz 8 hours ago from Idaho Falls, Idaho Level 4 Commenter

Very enjoyable and informative, like a history lesson in old world witchcraft. I learned a few things also. Thanks for sharing



Kimberleyclarke 11 hours ago from England

A fantastic read - thank you so much! Folklore rules.



Denis Lubojanski 11 hours ago from 7 Station Street, London

So nicely written. I was wondering that if "Hoodoo" & "Voodoo" was the same. Your article clarifies this thing so nicely. Up vote!



Guglielmo888 16 hours ago from Rome

KUDOS.Roots of American Witchcraft



HoodooMarie 18 months ago

Great hub! So many traditions in Appalachia are disappearing. As an Appalachian Folk Magick practitioner in the Mountains of Western, NC....I appreciate you for keeping the flame burning through your informative hub.



FlourishAnyway 2 years ago from USA Level 7 Commenter

Very interesting hub. I hadn't heard of the term, "Granny Magic," although I have heard references to some of its practices in various places I've lived in the eastern US.



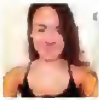
kittythedreamer 2 years ago from the Hearthfire Hub Author

Hi, Phyllis! I too have ancestors from both Ireland and also from Scotland and England, who also brought their ways over to the new world. :) I really enjoy reading about the old folklore and superstitions in the mountains. Too cool! Thanks for reading!



Phyllis Doyle 2 years ago from the high desert of Nevada. Level 5 Commenter

Great hub, Kitty. I have always been very interested in Granny Magic and Healing. Some of my ancestors from Ireland brought their magical ways of healing from the old country and also learned from/taught the Cherokee people about herbal and other magical healing. Both cultures believe in the wee ones (faeries and wee folk) who can be helpful in magic. I so enjoyed reading your hub. Thank you.



kittythedreamer 2 years ago from the Hearthfire Hub Author

Thank you, JMcFarland!

Bishop55 - Thanks for reading. :)



Bishop55 2 years ago from USA

cool hub. Never heard of Granny magic until now.



This was an awesome and informative hub. Voted up.

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-

The Coffin Lid

A moujik was driving along one night with a load of pots. His horse grew tired, and all of a sudden it came to a stand-still alongside of a graveyard. The moujik unharnessed his horse and set it free to graze; meanwhile he laid himself down on one of the graves. But somehow he didn't go to sleep.

He remained lying there some time. Suddenly the grave began to open beneath him: he felt the movement and sprang to his feet. The grave opened, and out of it came a corpse -- wrapped in a white shroud, and holding a coffin lid -- came out and ran to the church, laid the coffin-lid at the door, and then set off for the village.

The moujik was a daring fellow. He picked up the coffin-lid and remained standing beside his cart, waiting to see what would happen. After a short delay the dead man came back, and was going to snatch up his coffin-lid -- but it was not to be seen. Then the corpse began to track it out, traced it up to the moujik, and said:

"Give me my lid: if you don't, I'll tear you to bits!"

"And my hatchet, how about that?" answers the moujik. "Why, it's I who'll be chopping you into small pieces!"

"Do give it back to me, good man!" begs the corpse.

"I'll give it when you tell me where you've been and what you've done."

"Well, I've been in the village, and there I've killed a couple of youngsters."

"Well then, now tell me how they can be brought back to life."

The corpse reluctantly made answer:

"Cut off the left skirt of my shroud, and take it with you. When you come into the house where the

youngsters were killed, pour some live coals into a pot and put the piece of the shroud in with them, and then lock the door. The lads will be revived by the smoke immediately."

The moujik cut off the left skirt of the shroud, and gave up the coffin-lid. The corpse went to its grave -- the grave opened. But just as the dead man was descending into it, all of a sudden the cocks began to crow, and he hadn't time to get properly covered over. One end of the coffin-lid remained sticking out of the ground.

The moujik saw all this and made a note of it. The day began to dawn; he harnessed his horse and drove into the village.

In one of the houses he heard cries and wailing. In he went -- there lay two dead lads.

"Don't cry," says he, "I can bring them to life!"

"Do bring them to life, kinsman," say their relatives. "We'll give you half of all we possess."

The moujik did everything as the corpse had instructed him, and the lads came back to life. Their relatives were delighted, but they immediately seized the moujik and bound him with cords, saying:

"No, no, trickster! We'll hand you over to the authorities. Since you knew how to bring them back to life, maybe it was you who killed them!"

"What are you thinking about, true believers! Have the fear of God before your eyes!" cried the moujik.

Then he told them everything that had happened during the night. Well, they spread the news through the village; the whole population assembled and swarmed into the graveyard. They found out the grave from which the dead man had come out, they tore it open, and they drove an aspen stake right into the heart of the corpse, so that it might no more rise up and slay. But they rewarded the moujik richly, and sent him away home with great honor.

-
- Source: W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-Tales* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), pp. 309-311.
 - Ralston's source: Aleksandr Afanasyev, v., pp. 142-144. "From the Tambof Government."
-

The Two Corpses

A soldier had obtained leave to go home on furlough -- to pray to the holy images, and to bow down before his parents. And as he was going his way, at a time when the sun had long set, and all was dark around, it chanced that he had to pass by a graveyard. Just then he heard that some one was running after him, and crying:

"Stop! You can't escape!"

He looked back and there was a corpse running and gnashing its teeth. The soldier sprang on one side with all his might to get away from it, caught sight of a little chapel, and bolted straight into it.

There wasn't a soul in the chapel, but stretched out on a table there lay another corpse, with tapers burning in front of it. The soldier hid himself in a corner, and remained there hardly knowing whether he was alive or dead, but waiting to see what would happen. Presently up ran the first corpse -- the one that had chased the soldier -- and dashed into the chapel. Thereupon one that was lying on the table

jumped up, and cried to it:

"What hast thou come here for?"

"I've chased a soldier in here, so I'm going to eat him."

Come now, brother! He's run into my house. I shall eat him myself."

"No, I shall!"

"No, I shall!"

And they set to work fighting; the dust flew like anything. They'd have gone on fighting ever so much longer, only the cocks began to crow. Then both the corpses fell lifeless to the ground, and the soldier went on his way homeward in peace, saying:

"Glory be to Thee. O Lord! I am saved from the wizards!"

-
- Source: W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-Tales* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), p. 312.
 - Ralston's source: Aleksandr Afanasyev, vi., pp. 324-325.
-

The Soldier and the Vampire

A certain soldier was allowed to go home on furlough. Well, he walked and walked, and after a time he began to draw near to his native village. Not far off from that village lived a miller in his mill. In old times the soldier had been very intimate with him: why shouldn't he go and see his friend? He went. The miller received him cordially, and at once brought out liquor; and the two began drinking, and chattering about their ways and doings. All this took place towards nightfall, and the soldier stopped so long at the miller's that it grew quite dark.

When he proposed to start for his village, his host exclaimed:

"Spend the night here, trooper! It's very late now, and perhaps you might run into mischief."

"How so?"

"God is punishing us! A terrible warlock has died among us, and by night he rises from his grave, wanders through the village, and does such things as bring fear upon the very boldest! How could even you help being afraid of him?"

"Not a bit of it! A soldier is a man who belongs to the crown, and 'crown property cannot be drowned in water nor burnt in fire.' I'll be off: I'm tremendously anxious to see my people as soon as possible."

Off he set. His road lay in front of a graveyard. On one of the graves he saw a great fire blazing.

"What's that?" thinks he. "Let's have a look." When he drew near, he saw that the warlock was sitting by the fire, sewing boots.

"Hail, brother!" calls out the soldier.

The warlock looked up and said:

"What have you come here for?"

"Why, I wanted to see what you're doing."

The warlock threw his work aside and invited the soldier to a wedding.

"Come along, brother," says he, "let's enjoy ourselves. There's a wedding going on in the village."

"Come along!" says the soldier.

They came to where the wedding was; there they were given drink, and treated with the utmost hospitality. The warlock drank and drank, reveled and reveled, and then grew angry. He chased all the guests and relatives out of the house, threw the wedded pair into a slumber, took out two phials and an awl, pierced the hands of the bride and bridegroom with the awl, and began drawing off their blood. Having done this, he said to the soldier:

"Now let's be off."

Well, they went off.

On the way the soldier said:

"Tell me; why did you draw off their blood in those phials?"

"Why, in order that the bride and bridegroom might die. Tomorrow morning no one will be able to wake them. I alone know how to bring them back to life."

"How's that managed?"

"The bride and bridegroom must have cuts made in their heels, and some of their own blood must then be poured back into those wounds. I've got the bridegroom's blood stowed away in my right-hand pocket, and the bride's in my left."

The soldier listened to this without letting a single word escape him. Then the warlock began boasting again.

"Whatever I wish," says he, "That I can do!"

"I suppose it's quite impossible to get the better of you?" says the soldier.

"Why impossible? If any one were to make a pyre of aspen boughs, a hundred loads of them, and were to burn me on that pyre, then he'd be able to get the better of me. Only he'd have to look out sharp in burning me; for snakes and worms and different kinds of reptiles would creep out of my inside, and crows and magpies and jackdaws would come flying up. All these must be caught and flung on the pyre. If so much as a single maggot were to escape, then there'd be no help for it; in that maggot I should slip away!"

The soldier listened to all this and did not forget it. He and the warlock talked and talked, and at last they arrived at the grave.

"Well, brother," said the warlock, "now I'll tear you to pieces. Otherwise you'd be telling all this."

"What are you talking about? Don't you deceive yourself; I serve God and the Emperor."

The warlock gnashed his teeth, howled aloud, and sprang at the soldier -- who drew his sword and began laying about him with sweeping blows. They struggled and struggled; the soldier was all but at the end of his strength. "Ah!" thinks he, "I'm a lost man -- and all for nothing!" Suddenly the cocks began to crow. The warlock fell lifeless to the ground.

The soldier took the phials of blood out of the warlock's pockets, and went on to the house of his own people. When he had got there, and had exchanged greetings with his relatives, they said: "Did you see any disturbance, soldier?"

"No, I saw none."

"There now! Why we've a terrible piece of work going on in the village. A warlock has taken to haunting it!"

After talking awhile, they lay down to sleep. Next morning the soldier awoke, and began asking: "I'm told you've got a wedding going on somewhere here?"

"There was a wedding in the house of a rich moujik," replied his relative, "but the bride and bridegroom have died this very night -- what from, nobody knows."

They showed him the house. Thither he went without speaking a word. When he got there, he found the whole family in tears.

"What are you mourning about?" says he.

"Such and such is the state of things soldier," say they.

"I can bring your young people to life again. What will you give me if I do?"

"Take what you like, even were it half of what we've got!"

The soldier did as the warlock had instructed him, and brought the young people back to life. Instead of weeping there began to be happiness and rejoicing; the soldier was hospitably treated and well rewarded. Then -- left about, face! off he marched to the Starosta, and told him to call the peasants together and to get ready a hundred loads of aspen wood. Well, they took the wood into the graveyard, dragged the warlock out of his grave, placed him on the pyre, and set it alight -- the people all standing round in a circle with brooms, shovels, and fire-irons. The pyre became wrapped in flames, the warlock began to burn. His corpse burst, and out of it crept snakes, worms, and all sorts of reptiles, and up came flying crows, magpies, and jackdaws. The peasants knocked them down and flung them into the fire, not allowing so much as a single maggot to creep away! And so the warlock was thoroughly consumed, and the soldier collected his ashes and strewed them to the winds. From that time forth there was peace in the village.

The soldier received the thanks of the whole community. He stayed at home some time, enjoying himself thoroughly. Then he went back to the czar's service with money in his pocket. When he had served his time, he retired from the army, and began to live at his ease.

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- Source: W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-Tales* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), pp. 314-318.
 - Ralston's source: Aleksandr Afanasyev, v., pp. 144-147. "From the Tambof Government."
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The Shroud

In a certain village there was a girl who was lazy and slothful, hated working, but would gossip and chatter away like anything! Well, she took it into her head to invite the other girls to a spinning party. For in the villages, as every one knows, it is the lazybones who gives the spinning-feast, and the sweet-toothed are those who go to it.

Well, on the appointed night she got her spinners together. They spun for her, and she fed them and feasted them. Among other things they chatted about was this -- which of them all was the boldest?

Says the lazybones: "I'm not afraid of anything!"

"Well then," say the spinners, "if you're not afraid, go past the graveyard to the church, take down the holy picture from the door, and bring it here."

"Good, I'll bring it; only each of you must spin me a distaff-full."

That was just her sort of notion: to do nothing herself, but to get others to do it for her. Well, she went, took down the picture, and brought it home with her. Her friends all saw that sure enough it was the picture from the church. But the picture had to be taken back again, and it was now the midnight hour. Who was to take it? At length the lazybones said: "You girls go on spinning. I'll take it back myself. I'm not afraid of anything!"

So she went and put the picture back in its place. As she was passing the graveyard on her return, she saw a corpse in a white shroud, seated on a tomb. It was a moonlight night; everything was visible. She went up to the corpse, and drew away its shroud from it. The corpse held its peace, not uttering a word; no doubt the time for it to speak had not come yet. Well, she took the shroud and went home.

"There!" says she, "I've taken back the picture and put it in its place; and, what's more, here's a shroud I took away from a corpse." Some of the girls were horrified; others didn't believe what she said, and laughed at her.

But after they had supped and lain down to sleep, all of a sudden the corpse tapped at the window and said: "Give me my shroud! Give me my shroud!"

The girls were so frightened they didn't know whether they were alive or dead. But the lazybones took the shroud, went to the window, opened it, and said: "There, take it."

"No," replied the corpse, "restore it to the place you took it from." Just then the cocks suddenly began to crow. The corpse disappeared.

Next night, when the spinners had all gone home to their own houses, at the very same hour as before, the corpse came, tapped at the window, and cried: "Give me my shroud!"

Well, the girl's father and mother opened the window and offered him his shroud. "No," says he, "let her take it back to the place she took it from."

"Really now, how could one go to a graveyard with a corpse? What a horrible idea!" she replied. Just then the cocks crew. The corpse disappeared.

Next day the girl's father and mother sent for the priest, told him the whole story, and entreated him to help them in their trouble. "Couldn't a service be performed?" they said.

The priest reflected awhile; then he replied: "Please tell her to come to church tomorrow."

Next day the lazybones went to church. The service began, numbers of people came to it. But just as they were going to sing the cherubim song, there suddenly arose, goodness knows whence, so terrible a whirlwind that all the congregation fell flat on their faces. And it caught up that girl, and then flung her down on the ground. The girl disappeared from sight; nothing was left of her but her back hair.

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- Source: W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-Tales* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), pp. 307-309.
 - Ralston's source: Aleksandr Afanasyev, v. no. 30a, pp. 140-142. "From the Voroneje Government."
 - Ralston's footnote concerning "her back hair": "The *kosa* or single braid in which Russian girls

wear their hair."

- This is a folktale of Aarne-Thompson type 366.
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The Dog and the Corpse

A moujik went out in pursuit of game one day, and took a favorite dog with him. He walked and walked through woods and bogs, but got nothing for his pains. At last the darkness of night surprised him. At an uncanny hour he passed by a graveyard, and there, at a place where two roads met, he saw standing a corpse in a white shroud. The moujik was horrified, and knew not which way to go -- whether to keep on or to turn back.

"Well, whatever happens, I'll go on," he thought; and on he went, his dog running at his heels. When the corpse perceived him, it came to meet him; not touching the earth with its feet, but keeping about a foot above it -- the shroud fluttering after it. When it had come up with the sportsman, it made a rush at him; but the dog seized hold of it by its bare calves, and began a tussle with it. When the moujik saw his dog and the corpse grappling with each other, he was delighted that things had turned out so well for himself, and he set off running home with all his might. The dog kept up the struggle until cock-crow, when the corpse fell motionless to the ground. Then the dog ran off in pursuit of its master, caught him up just as he reached home, and rushed at him, furiously trying to bite and to rend him. So savage was it, and so persistent, that it was as much as the people of the house could do to beat it off.

"Whatever has come over the dog?" asked the moujik's old mother. "Why should it hate its master so?"

The moujik told her all that had happened.

"A bad piece of work, my son!" said the old woman. "The dog was disgusted at your not helping it. There it was fighting with the corpse -- and you deserted it, and thought only of saving yourself! Now it will owe you a grudge for ever so long."

Next morning, while the family were going about the farmyard, the dog was perfectly quiet. But the moment its master made his appearance, it began to growl like anything.

They fastened it to a chain; for a whole year they kept it chained up. But in spite of that, it never forgot how its master had offended it. One day it got loose, flew straight at him, and began trying to throttle him. So they had to kill it.

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- Source: W. R. S. Ralston, *Russian Folk-Tales* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1873), pp. 313-314.
 - Ralston's source: Aleksandr Afanasyev, vi., pp. 321-322.
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On February 27, 2016 12:23 am by Tony Chinonso

By Ifeanyi Okolie

In July 2015 when a notorious kidnapper who had terrorized the South-East/South-South regions of the country, Henry Chibuzor, AKA *Vampire*, was arrested by the DSS and paraded by the Imo State Governor, Rochas Okorocha, many thought that it would be the end of a suspect who was accused of abducting over 200 prominent citizens and killing some of them after collecting ransom for their release.



Suspects

But that was not the case as the 27-year-old man, who was accused of kidnapping and killing the wife of a royal father in Imo State and a senior official of the Imo State Ministry of Environment after the sum of N50 million was paid as ransom, had gone on to form a new gang from prison custody.

Vampire, who was also behind the gruesome killing of his girlfriend

and other seven members of her family, in their apartments in Igando area of Lagos State in 2013, was said to have recruited an official of the Nigeria Prison Service, NPS, in Owerri where he is been detained on awaiting trial and made him form a new kidnap gang that would help him raise money for his bail.

The prison official identified as Chukwuma Agim, assembled a six-man gang headed by one Chiboy also known as Eze Ekudele and carried several operations in Imo State, and in one of their operations, they abducted a middle-aged woman and a ransom of N5 million was paid to the gang. After that operation, operatives of the Inspector General of Police Special Intelligence Response Team (SIRT), which was recently formed by the IGP Solomon Arase to combat armed robbery, kidnapping, terrorism and other heinous crimes within the country and headed by CSP Abba Kyari, rounded up five members of the gang, including the prison official in various parts of Imo State.

The suspects who were currently being detained at the Imo State Criminal Investigations Department, were identified as Agim Chukwuma, Chukwudi Uzudima, Kelechi Andrew, Chiaotu Joseph and Aloze Chinonso. They told *Saturday Vanguard* that greed, poverty and stupidity led them into the gang. Agim, who said he was enlisted into the NPS in 2015 and was posted to Owerri Prison in November 2015, said he was stupid to have listened to Vampire when he approached him in prison as he was warned by his mother not to go close

to Vampire.

“My ordeal”



*Suspect Chukwuma Agim
(Nigeria Prison Service,
official)*

Narrating his story, the prison official said “My name is Agim Chukwuma. I am 27 years old, not yet married, and I am student of Imo State University. I study insurance and I am in my final year. I am a native of Isiala Mbano Local Government of Imo State. I joined the Nigeria Prisons Service in November 2015, was trained at Arms Squad Training School, Owerri, Imo State and I was posted to Owerri Prison. I am a general duty officer and I was posted on morning duty after one week documentation. I earn N43,000 monthly.

I have no choice over my salary; in fact I was thankful because I didn't get the job with BSc. Those who secured the job with BSc earn close to N100,000. When I came for industrial attachment last year, our chief warden told us that there was a notorious kidnapper called Vampire who was arrested and would be brought to Owerri Prison. When I was posted to that prison, my mother who is also serving in that prison

warned me to avoid interacting with the said Vampire, that he might led me into trouble.

“Early this year, I met one Nnamdi; he was being detained in cell 2 in ‘I Ward’, which is the same cell Vampire is kept. He approached me behind the food store, and asked if I could help and get him a phone. He offered me N3,000. I told him that I could not do that; he kept pressurizing me and I refused. He then went and met another officer, who got him the phone. He approached me again. This time with Vampire and they told me that he wanted us to be friends. We sat behind the food store and they told me several stories about their escapades in kidnapping and I found it attractive.

“They told me that they were rich people and they normally visited several popular bars in major towns within the South-East and South-South states, and when they observed rich people leaving the bar, they went after them and kidnapped them. At the end of our conversation, they wrote a phone number on a piece of paper and asked that I should call the person. I didn't save the number because we don't use phones in the prison. They told me that they wanted me to call the number and the person would link me to one Chiboy, AKA Eze Ekudele. He told me that Chiboy is a big kidnapper.

“When I called the person, he identified himself as Ejima. I then told him that I got his number from Nnamdi from prison and he wanted us to link up to Chiboy who could help us set up a gang because he has guns, experience and a vehicle to make the job easy. “Nnamdi also gave me the number of one Chukwudi Uzordima. I called him as well and I met the two of them at Control Roundabout in Owerri and we agreed that we should meet with Chiboy and when we did, he took us to a hotel in Elele, bought us drinks and asked if we had done kidnapping before; we said no.

“He laughed at us and called us amateurs and told us that he was going to come to Owerri the next day. The next day he called us and said he was going to pick somebody at Mbise

road, that the person had someone giving information. But the work did not succeed. He called us that he was coming to Owerri, and we met on Port Harcourt Road. We did not know that he had kidnapped somebody.

“He was driving a Nissan Pathfinder jeep. He normally worked with a policeman and when they picked me up at Avu Junction, I saw the victim inside the vehicle. A policeman was pointing a gun at a woman and he asked me get out of the vehicle. Then Ejima and Bright entered the vehicle. The next day, he called me to go and buy pure water, can malt and bread.

“On the day, they went to pick the woman. She wasn’t the main target, but she was picked up after church. She was traced to her house and was picked. It was Nnamdi that called me to look after the woman in the bush. I borrowed money from a friend and took it to buy food items for the woman. I gave the food to Uzordima to give to the woman. “I later learned that the woman stayed for two days. N1.1 million was collected as ransom and I was given N100,000. I bought clothes, settled the debt that I was owing and fixed my car. The remaining was what they got for the job and Chiboy told me not to bother that he had a way to give Vampire and Nnamdi their own share of the ransom. “But a few days after that operation, the police came and arrested me. It was Ejima who led them to me. I regret getting myself into this mess”, he lamented.

“I was with the victim in bush, got N70,000 as my share from the ransom”

Joseph Chiaotu, AKA Ejima, a 21-year-old suspected member of the gang who is from Ohumba Umuwayi area in Ohaji Local Government Area of Imos State. He had this to say: “I attended only primary school and I dropped out because I lost my father at an early age. I became a hunter. Then I started farming before I went and learnt painting. I learnt painting for a year and six months. I met Nnamdi in Ugbuwaku Local Government Area, on a bike, and he told me that he wanted to help me but before I knew what was happening, he was arrested.

“While in prison, he gave my number to a prison official who called me and said he was from Nnamdi and we needed to work and assist him raise money for his bail. Nnamdi also asked us to go to his wife and collect Chiboy’s phone number. When I got the number, we called and met him in Elele; from there we agreed on our job.

“Then they went for their first job, but they did not succeed. Then Chiboy told me that he needed a driver to drive us. I introduced Anozie Chinonso to him and when he did the second job, he asked both of us to meet him at Avu Junction. When he picked us, we met the woman in his car and we drove on to Egbema Road and at the middle of the road, he dropped us and asked that we should take the woman into the bush

“I fed the woman with Gala and Lucozade Boost. When I got calls to release the woman, I took her to the expressway before running back into the bush. I was given N70,000 after the operation. I bought shoes and clothes with N10,000 and hide the remaining in my apartment.

“I don’t know how the police heard about what I did and they came after me and arrested me.

I led the police to arrest the Prison official and four other members of the gang, but we were unable to arrest Chiboy. He noticed the presence of the police and he attempted to escape. He ran into the bus and the police fired several shots at him but they did not hit him.”

Anozie Chinonso, 25, the last suspect, had this to say: “I am from Abom Mbise. I attended Apapa Nike Primary School, Enugu. After my father, who was a soldier, died, my mother brought me back to Mbise and gave me to my father’s brother, who is a dry-cleaner to work with, but the man later died. I went to Aba and I started doing bus conductor and from there I learnt how to drive.

“My people sold my father’s land and bought a bus for me and it got spoilt after a while. When I met Ejima recently, I told him that I had no job and I needed assistance and he promised he would help me. On the day the woman was kidnapped, he called me that I should come out and secure the woman. I came out and we waited at Avu Junction and we entered into Chiboys vehicle, where we saw the woman. But Ejima I and two of Chiboy’s brothers were the people who stayed with the woman in the bush. The woman spent two days before the ransom was paid and we released her.

“I didn’t touch the woman but told her that I wasn’t a bad person, that all I was looking for was a little money to buy a bus on hire purchase. Even when the woman came and identified us after I was arrested, she also told the police that I was nice to her. After we released the woman, I was given N100,000. I also had N30,000 with me, but as at the time I wanted to pay for the bus on hire purchase, the police came and arrested me. It was poverty that led me into this crime. I am a very poor person struggling for myself and family. I have no one helping me. My mother is a very old woman. I pray this woman and family would forgive me.”

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By

cat@theshadowlands.net

Myth & Lore:

A vampire feeds on the life essence of their victims. This usually occurs by drinking the blood of their victim. The reasons that the vampire needs blood to survive varies from culture to culture. Some feel that the vampire needs blood to flow through their veins to keep their bodies animated and limit the damage of decay. Others feel that the beasts feed as a sadistic habit in order to wreak havoc and fear.

This theory of course also makes one think that it may not be the blood that animates the vampire, but the fear & pain. Vampires aren't particular they will drink the blood of animals as well as humans.

The most obvious characteristic that you think of when referring to the vampire is of course that the creature is dead yet walks among the living. Most tales of vampirism tell us that these beings have fangs, are afraid of sunlight, they can shape-shift, (i.e. bats and wolves), they cry tears of blood, sleep in a coffin during the day and have extreme levels of strength and speed. Of course it goes without saying that this creature is immortal, unless of course killed using the proper methods.

As stated before different cultures have different myths about the vampires. For instance European beliefs the vampire is dead, zombie like, hideously deformed from death and inherently evil. Whereas the American legend has been handed to us by Hollywood. The creature is a sensual, desirable one. Most of our movies and fiction combine the myth and legend of Europe, but also adds the dash of Americana, making this being a seductive beauty, with brawn as well as brains, and sometimes even a dash of compassion.

Who is a vampire? Are you predestined from birth to become one of the undead? In older lore vampires were people who died unnaturally and couldn't face the fact that they were truly dead. In my research I found some really fun and interesting ways of becoming one with the undead. The most common way of becoming is of course being bitten by a vampire. From here on the becoming is very bizarre. Let's start with some of the predisposition's; being conceived on a holy day, being weaned too early, being born the seventh son of the seventh son or receiving a curse. The last two are my personal favorites a mother who did not eat enough salt during pregnancy and a mother being stared at by a vampire while pregnant. Enough of predisposition's, let's move onto ways that you can cause yourself to become a vampire. Common beliefs in older lore include being a witch or were-wolf, being cruel or evil person, committing suicide, being murdered or being the murderer. All these things can make you a vampire upon death. But wait, there are more ways to be a do-it-yourselfer. These are my personal favorites in this category; eating sheep killed by a wolf, leading an immoral life, (i.e. prostitutes & treacherous barmaids), or (for a priest) saying mass while in the state of mortal sin. For the Europeans after death becomings include; wind from the Russian Steppe blowing on the corpse and being buried face up in the grave, the latter of the two believed in

certain parts of Romania. Other after death causes of the becoming are; having a cat or other animal jump or fly over a corpse, having a shadow fall on a corpse, no burial or improper burial rites, murder that is unrevenged, having ones brother sleep walk (?), death by drowning and finally stealing the ropes used to bury the corpse. So my research turned up many way to become a vampire.

How do you detect that someone is a vampire? Ever wonder if your friends, family or teachers are just Vampires leeching you dry? The following suggestions are taken basically from old myths and lore. If you find a corpse that is bloated, showed blood in the mouth, grew long nails and hair chances are that you are dealing with a vampire. (Of course in modern times we have realized that the previous conditions are all part of decomposition.) To detect a vampire at graveside or in the cemetery, if you are not looking for anyone in particular, first look for fingersized holes around the grave, look for disturbed dirt, constant mists, disturbed coffins, moved or fallen tombstones footprints leading to and from the grave, (just make sure that they aren't your own), no birds singing, dogs barking and refusing to enter the cemetery, geese screaming when near the suspected grave and last, but not least, groaning sounds from under the earth.

If you think that someone you know has been a victim of vampirism or might possibly be a vampire here are some ways of detection. If the supposed victim suffers from one or more of the following list chances are that you are dealing with the undead. Things to look for are sleeplessness, nightmares, anemia, bite marks on the neck, (dead give away), exhaustion, nervousness, irritability, sleepwalking, difficulty in breathing, no appetite, weight loss, aversion to garlic, strange dental growths and photosensitivity. All taken together means that you are either dealing with a vampire or a parent of young children.

The appearance of the suggested vampire is also important. You should look for the following; fangs, red eyes, long fingernails, paleness, reluctance to enter a house without an invitation, hairy palms and aversion to bright lights. Also look to see if your family and/or friends have a reflection or cast a shadow.

Once you have determined that you are dealing with the undead, the following information is to help you prevent, protect and destroy your evil demon. Prevention for pre-burial is fun, here is just a sampling of what I found; destroyed vampire that caused death, close all windows, prevent moonlight from falling on the corpse, cover all mirrors, (keep in mind that these are old rituals used when people still buried their own), place corn or garlic in mouth and cover all standing water. Now for some of my personal favorites; pour incense into eyes, nose and ears of victim. Bind the body of the victim by tying the mouth shut, tying legs or feet together, weld the toes together (?), and then wrap in carpet or net. Decapitate the corpse and place the head under the arm or between legs or bury it in a separate grave. The number one favorite to prevent a loved one from becoming one of the undead, stretch a dead cat or dog across the threshold to the house.

If your prevention does not work, then you should try to protect yourself and your loved ones from the same fate. Garlic of course is one well-known method. It can be used on windows, doors, around the neck and under armpits (?); if you mix it with water it can be sprinkled or

sprayed throughout an area. Also try fishnets on windows, doors and graves, for some unknown reason vampires are obsessed with untangling objects. Seeds are another way to protect yourself, just sprinkle into yard or walkways; vampires are compelled to count seeds (i.e. the count on Sesame Street). Holy water is yet another popular way of protection. Bells ringing will keep the undead away if ringing constantly. My last suggestion would be placing mirrors on the doors, because, as one author put it, it really annoys the vampire that they cannot see their own reflection.

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Now that I have given you the information to detect, prevent and protect yourself from the evil critters, lets move onto Myths of the creation of the vampire. Many authors have written about vampires and their creation, but the story or myth that is my favorite is the "Myth of Merrydeath" by an unknown author.

The tale tells of a beautiful queen ruling for her children in ancient times. Keep in mind that this is a time when men were still new to the earth. Queen Meredith had taken a lover after years of being alone due to the king's death. Her lover was Mambayan, a warrior chieftain and close friend of the king. Well as all good love stories go, her lover was wounded in battle. Also around the same time a vampfara was imprisoned in the castle keep. Meredith tried everything in her power to save Manbayan, but to no avail. Death was imminent. An old crone suggested that since the vampfara appeared to be able to heal itself, maybe they should try the blood of the vampfara to heal Manbayan. Meredith formed an idea in her mind to visit the vampfara and request his help. That very same night she did visit the vampfara. When she requested his blood to save her lover. The vampfara thought about her request and he requested his freedom in return. He told her that she must carry his blood inside of her, as it had to be kept warm. He bit her and drank her blood greedily and just as she was about to die he sliced his wrist and held it to her mouth, making her drink his blood. Then he told her that in order to save her lover she must repeat the same procedure. Of course they have now died and been made into vampires. The kingdom rebelled against the lovers who now walked with the undead and cast them out. As the story goes they are still roaming the night together and the vampfarant was freed as per agreement. That is the myth of Queen Merrydeath.

History:

When you think about vampires usually the first name that you think of is Dracula. Bram Stoker is the man who penned the famous novel "Dracula". It is thought this story that most of

us are introduced to vampires.

"Dracula" was actually based on a true Romanian Prince named Vlad Tepes, (pronounced Tzepesh). He was seen as a hero by his countrymen. According to most legend he was considered a fair, but very cruel man. Most of the information about this prince has been handed down to us by verbal tradition in his homeland, and by Russian and German pamphlets printed shortly after his death. The verbal form tells us of his conquests for his country, whereas the pamphlets portrayed him as an evil demon.

The name Dracula (draculaea) simply means son of the Dracul. The name Dracul seems a little harder to decipher. Some say that it means demon or devil, while other historians assert that Vlad the II belonged as a knight of the order of the dragon, hence the surname dracul-dragon, the insignia of the order was a dragon being knocked down by a cross. The knights were a group of Slavic rulers and warlords sworn to uphold the Christian faith against the Turks. The name Tepes is also report to mean "the impaler".

So that was the history of the name, but who was this man so closely connected to the vampire. His life started off well as the son of the prince of Wallachia. At a young age he was captured by the Turks and imprisoned by the Sultan. It has been suggested that Vlad developed his sadistic tendencies during his captivity, as he would not convert his allegiance to the Sultan. Vlad was eventually released as the Turks thought him subdued.

Vlad the III actually ruled Wallachia three separate times as the prince or voevod (warlord). He first ruled in 1448, he left the throne the same year because he realized that at that moment in time he was not strong enough to defeat the Turks. His second term as ruler began in 1456. He ruled well with the help of his allies, he ensured peace in his country. He was always depicted as a severe ruler. He was ousted by his brother with the help of the Turks, in 1462. His third and final rule only lasted a month in 1476. At this time he was beaten in battle by the Turks and killed afterward. His head was presented to the Sultan as proof of his death and his body buried in a monastery. An interesting footnote to this story is that when Dracula- Vlad Tepes the III's grave was later opened all that was found was a pile of horse bones.

Of course there were reasons why the Turks were afraid of Dracula and his countrymen considered him so severe in his punishments. Vlad the III was known as the impaler because that is how he killed many of his opponents. There are numerous stories that tell of the atrocities committed by the man.

One story tells of how he impaled his victims in geometric patterns, the height of the stake indicated the rank of the victim. The corpses were often left rotting for months as a deterrent to the Turkish armies. Vlad was not just an impaler, he also had a few other tortures that he seemed to favor such as, nails in the head, cutting off limbs, blinding, strangulation, burning, mutilation of sexual organs, scalping and skinning. The list seems to go on and on, too morbid to continue.

He did not like the noblemen of his country, because they were untrustworthy, and he often employed his methods of torture against them as well as his enemies. At one point he even

had his noblemen building Dracula Castle. It has also been reported that he was not fond of the ailing or poor. To rid his country of these people he held a feast for them. At the end of the feast ordered his soldiers to bar up the exits and burn the great hall to the ground. His reason for this was so that the poor and invalid would no longer be a burden to his countrymen.

There is never any mention of Vlad the III being a Vampire, just a sadistic ruler. Vlad was a hero to his people, even though his methods of his punishment were unequivocally severe and cruel. He helped defeat the Turks and kept them out of Romania for many years. I have used many different sources for this history and all tell the tale a little differently, but the same basic premise is the same throughout all sources. (See acknowledgements at the end of the article.)

There are other famous people in history that were considered vampires. In the next few paragraphs I will tell of Elizabeth Bathory, the Vampire of Croglin Range, Arnold Paole, John George Haige, Fritz Haarmann, Martin Dummolard and Peter Kurten.

Elizabeth Bathory was a Transylvanian noblewoman born in 1560. She was married to Count Ferencz Nadasdy. By the age of 25 years old she became obsessed with her beauty and terrified of growing old. When her husband died in 1604 Elizabeth moved back to her family lands in Vienna. She began to practice certain forms of sorcery, which included attending rituals that sacrificed animals.

Elizabeth became obsessed with blood by accident. She was correcting a servant girl for not performing her duties to the satisfaction of the countess. Elizabeth went after the young girl with a pair of scissors. Her blood was splayed over Elizabeth, whom upon cleaning discovered that it made her skin more youthful. This started her descent into hell; it is thought that she participated in the murders of over 600 young girls. She preferred the blood of younger girls and considered them to be her fountain of youth. She would torture her victims for weeks and sometimes month before actually killing them. By December of 1610, only six years after the death of her husband, she was brought to trial for her atrocities and found guilty. Due to the fact that she was a noblewoman she would not be put to death for her crimes. She was sentenced to life imprisonment in her own home. She was placed in a small room with no windows or doors, only an opening for food to be passed through and slits for air. The documents of her trial were sealed, when later found they were not completely intact. The rumors still circulated that not only did she bath in the blood of her victims, but she also drank it as well.

The vampire of Croglin Range is another interesting story. There is no exact name given to this creature, but when chased by one of the victim's families, it disappeared into an old family crypt that had been in the town for hundreds of years. When the vault was opened by the town's people it was discovered that all the coffins but one had been destroyed. Inside the remaining coffin was a mummified corpse with a fresh bullet wound. The villagers disturbed by this sight of the corpse removed the vile being and burnt it on a funeral pyre. That vampire visits the town of Croglin Range no more.

Arnold Paole is another unique character in history. This story is actually documented and

can be found in a few history books from the area. Arnold Paole was from Medvenga, near Belgrade. The story goes that he returned home from Greece in 1727, where he had served in the army. Upon his return he married a local girl. He often told her that he feared an early demise. Sure enough, while working on his farm he fell from a great height and was returned home, he from internal injuries within a few days. After a month townspeople had begun reporting that they had seen Arnold in their homes. These people soon turned up dead from reasons unknown. Arnold's body was exhumed. When the coffin was opened they found the body had experienced no decomposition, old skin and nails had been replaced by new. There was even fresh blood on his lips. A member of the group that had exhumed the body staked Arnold. The corpse sat up and screamed, fresh blood flowed from the wound. The group then began to do the same to all of Arnold's victims, careful to surround the bodies with garlic. All was quiet until 1732 when there was another group of unexplained deaths. The town took no chances this time and exhumed all of the corpses to investigate. Again they found no decomposition among the bodies, so they performed the ritual again. One theory explaining the second outbreak was that Arnold had also attacked cattle as well as people and when the cattle was slaughtered for meat and consumed the vampire qualities were passed on to the innocent victims.

John George Haige was another character in history whose claim to fame was vampirism. In 1944 the "Acid Bath Vampire" was born. John had a troubled youth in Wakefield, England. He claimed to have a reoccurring dream about a forest of crucifixes, the crucifixes would turn into trees dripping blood. There was a man there to collect the blood and offer it to John, but that was when he would wake up, never tasting the offering. He would later rent a basement workshop and shortly thereafter commit his first murder. He only drained enough fresh blood from his first victim to fill a cup, which he would drink. Then he would dispose of the body by dumping it into a bathtub and pouring acid on it, letting it melt until only sludge would remain. Then he would gather the sludge and dump it down a manhole located in the workshop. He killed many victims this way and was caught because of his increasing acid orders. This led to his arrest, where he confessed everything. It only took a Jury 15 minutes to deliberate and return with a guilty verdict. He was hung on August 10, 1949.

Another fun character was Fritz Haarmann. He and two accomplices committed many grisly murders. Fritz was into cannibalism and like biting his victims on the throat. His other good qualities consisted of being a child molester and selling the flesh of his victims to unsuspecting customers in his cook-shop. Fritz was beheaded in April of 1925. His brain was donated to science for research.

Martin Dummolard was a man possessed by a woman. He was called the "Monster of Montluel". Martin met his mistress Justine Lafayette when he moved into her boarding house. Martin would drink the blood of his victims and take the fleshier parts home for Justine to eat. They murdered close to eighty girls before being caught in 1888. Justine was beheaded by the guillotine, and Martin spent the remainder of his life in an asylum for the criminally insane.

Our final story takes place in Germany and is about a man named Peter Kurten. The "Vampire of Dusseldorf" as he was known, was the son of an alcoholic father and a mother who just didn't care about anything. He was a truck driver, a bespectacled little man, very

unassuming, however, this man was able to assault or murder twenty-nine people during his reign of terror. His victims were strangled, raped and then he would slit their throats so that he could drink their blood. He married, hoping that it help him to control his urges. This did not work. He was a devoted husband by day and an evil creature by night. Eventually, he confessed his crimes to his wife, who then turned him in to the police. He was convicted and sentenced to death in 1931. He wrote letters to the families of his victims, stating with no remorse that some people crave alcohol, where as, he craved blood and apparently needed some kind of sexual fulfillment.

Of course these are just a small sampling of those in history that were considered vampires. These people needed or craved blood to survive just as our Vampires of lore needed blood to survive.

Are there really vampires? That is for you the reader to decide. Those who lust for blood must have some reason for this need, but again that is for you to decide. If you have any questions please contact me at cat@theshadowlands.com. I will do my best to answer them.

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Brown Out

snopes.com

<http://www.snopes.com/music/artists/vanhalen.asp>

snopes

updated From the archive



Claim:
Van
Halen's
standard

performance contract contained a provision calling for them to be provided backstage with a bowl of M&Ms from which all the brown candies has been removed.



TRUE

Example: *[Harrington, 1981]*

Van Halen tends to make the news portion of radio more often than it gets airplay. There was the M&M riot in New Mexico where the band did thousands of dollars of damage to a hall when they were served brown M&Ms — their contract said the brown ones had to be removed.

Origins: Rock concerts have come a long ways since the days when the Beatles performed in boxing rings and hockey rinks, and made no greater demand of

promoters than they be provided with clean towels and a few bottles of soft drinks. As the audiences grew larger, promoters stood to make more and more money from staging concerts, which meant that not only could rock stars command higher prices for their

performances, but they were able to demand other perks as well, such as luxurious accommodations, lavish backstage buffets, and chauffeured transportation. It was inevitable that some high-demand acts, all their financial and pampering whims satisfied, would exercise their power and start making frivolous demands of promoters, simply because they could.

By far the most notorious of these whimsical requests is the legend that Van Halen's standard concert contract called for them to be provided with a bowl of M&Ms backstage, but with provision that all the brown candies must be removed. And indeed, a copy of a contract rider from Van Halen's 1982 world tour, under the "Munchies" section, does document that the band specified they be provided with "M&M's

(WARNING: ABSOLUTELY NO BROWN ONES)":

Munchies

Potato chips with assorted dips

Nuts

Pretzels

→ M & M's (WARNING: ABSOLUTELY NO BROWN ONES)

Twelve (12) Reese's peanut butter cups

Twelve (12) assorted Dannon yogurt (on ice)

The presence of even a single brown M&M in that bowl, rumor had it, was sufficient legal cause for Van Halen to peremptorily cancel a

scheduled appearance without advance notice (and usually an excuse for them to go on a destructive rampage as well).

The legendary "no brown M&Ms" contract clause was indeed real, but the purported motivation for it was not. The M&Ms provision was included in Van Halen's contracts not as an act of caprice, but because it served a practical purpose: to provide a simple way of determining whether the technical specifications of the contract had been thoroughly read and complied with. As Van Halen lead singer David Lee Roth explained in his autobiography: Van Halen was the first band to take huge productions into tertiary, third-level markets. We'd pull up with nine eighteen-wheeler trucks, full of gear, where the standard was three trucks, max. And there were many, many technical errors — whether

it was the girders couldn't support the weight, or the flooring would sink in, or the doors weren't big enough to move the gear through.

The contract rider read like a version of the Chinese Yellow Pages because there was so much equipment, and so many human beings to make it function. So just as a little test, in the technical aspect of the rider, it would say "Article 148: There will be fifteen amperage voltage sockets at twenty-foot spaces, evenly, providing nineteen amperes ..." This kind of thing. And article number 126,

in the middle of nowhere, was: "There will be no brown M&M's in the backstage area, upon pain of forfeiture of the show, with full compensation."

So, when I would walk backstage, if I saw a brown M&M in that bowl ... well, line-check the

entire production. Guaranteed you're going to arrive at a technical error. They didn't read the contract. Guaranteed you'd run into a problem. Sometimes it would threaten to just destroy the whole show. Something like, literally, life-threatening.

Nonetheless, the media ran exaggerated and inaccurate accounts of Van Halen's using violations of the "no brown M&Ms" clause as justification for engaging in childish, destructive behavior (such as the newspaper article quoted at the top of this page). David Lee Roth's version of such events was decidedly different:

The folks in Pueblo, Colorado, at the university, took the contract rather kinda casual. They had one of these new rubberized bouncy basketball floorings in their arena. They hadn't read the contract, and weren't sure, really, about the *weight* of this production; this thing weighed like the business end of a 747.

I came backstage. I found some brown M&M's, I went into full Shakespearean "*What is this before me?*" . . . you know, with the skull in one hand . . .

and promptly trashed the dressing room. Dumped the buffet, kicked a hole in the door, twelve thousand dollars' worth of fun.

The *staging* sank through their floor. They didn't bother to look at the weight requirements or anything, and this sank through their new flooring and did eighty thousand dollars' worth of damage to the arena floor. The whole thing had to be replaced. It came out in the press that I discovered brown M&M's and did eighty-five thousand dollars' worth of damage to the backstage area.

Well, who am I to get in the way of a good rumor?

Last updated: 27 December 2014

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Villagers fear 'vampire' killer sucking blood out of hundreds of chickens... FoxFeeds Pro

790talknow.com

Posted 2016-02-29 16:00:08 - by Admin

Local residents from a village in east China have been left baffled after around 200 chicken and ducks were killed by what they are describing as a mysterious 'vampire.'

The hunt is now on for the predator in Pudong, close to Shanghai city, since it began its nightly killing spree last week, reports the People's Daily Online.

After sucking the blood of its prey, the unidentified animal left one clue – a webbed, four-toed footprint. Villagers suspect it escaped from Shanghai Wild Animal Park, which is just over a mile away.



Horror: Villagers in Pudong, close to Shanghai city, have seen 200 birds killed by a mysterious predator

Evidence: After sucking the blood of its prey the unidentified animal left one clue, a four-toed footprint

For the past week, the predator has killed chickens, ducks and even some small rabbits.

According to the report, it comes at night and only sucks the blood of its prey rather than feeding on the meat.

The birds have been found with two to three bites on their backs and hips.

Although villagers suspect the mysterious killer comes from the nearby wildlife park, officials from the centre have told Chinese media that none of their animals have gone missing recently.

They have joined forces with some of the farmers to help

catch the beast using an iron cage with live chickens inside to lure it in. So far, their efforts have proved unsuccessful.

A cunning plan: Villagers have set up cages with dead birds inside to hopefully trap the animal inside

Unsuccessful: All efforts to capture the vampire-like creature in the Chinese village have so far failed

Local police have carried out night time inspection of livestock since the killer began its attacks according to South China Morning Post.



The webbed footprint left behind is said to be the size of a small child's hand.

An official from the Pudong Forestry Station told reporters, from the footprints left at the scene and the size of the bite marks, it is likely the predator is a raccoon or a badger, which usually burrow at night.

They added that it is likely the animal has just finished hibernating and is hunting for prey.

Although badgers are omnivores, they mainly stick to smaller meals like earthworms, slugs and frogs, so a bite like this from a badger is unlikely.

There is a higher chance that the 'vampire' predator is in fact a raccoon. Like the badger it is also an omnivore, but prefers to eat larger animals like small rabbits, squirrels and birds.



Officials from the Pudong Forestry Station believe the big predator is either a badger (left) or a raccoon (right)

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Waiter tortured to death in Satanic ritual by friends who wanted to make him a vampire

naij.com

**Waiter hacked to death in Satanic ritual**

Andrew Sweeney

– A Mexican waiter has been brutally murdered as part of a Satanic ritual.

– He was horrifically assaulted by cultists who believed they were turning him into a vampire.

– Three people, the youngest an 18-year-old student, have been arrested and face 40 years in jail if found guilty.

A waiter from Mexico was butchered and killed by his so-called friends in an evil Satanic ritual.

Edwin Juarez Palma, 24, died after being strangled, beaten, and slashed in the neck with a broken bottle in Chihuahua.

He was tortured so brutally because his assailants believe their violence would turn Palma into a vampire.



A teenage girl, 18-year-old student Iveth Lopez, is among those being held.

The other two suspects were named as Gustavo Dorantes, 18, and Omar Sanchez, 25.

They face up to 40 years in prison if found guilty.

Police say Edwin, known as Piwa, was killed after being fooled into taking part in an initiation ceremony

to become part of a satanic cult called the Sons of Baphomet 1.

Instead he was tortured after having his hands tied behind his back after one of the alleged killers persuaded the others their victim should be sacrificed so he could return to life as a vampire.

Police were alerted last Tuesday after his body was found abandoned in the street wrapped inside two plastic bags in what detectives believe was a botched attempt to pass the murder

off as a drugs-related crime.



satanic

The murder reportedly took place inside the toilets late at night and the killers are said to have used bleach to try to clean up the scene of the crime.

Police chief Pablo Rocha said: *"This crime took place during an initiation ceremony led by a satanic sect called Sons of Baphomet 1 during which the victim was supposed to become a vampire."*

"All that's left now to do is to arrest the leader of the sect whose name we

have."

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A warlock in Mexico has predicted that Donald Trump will not be the 45th president of America.

newrepublic.com

Bijan Stephen



Alfredo Estrella/Getty

A warlock in Mexico has predicted that Donald Trump will not be the 45th president of America.

BuzzFeed's Nicolás Medina Mora reported that Antonio Vazquez—known across the country as “The Great Warlock of Mexico”—appeared on the popular Univision show *El Gordo y la Flaca* to make his predictions about the political events

of the next year. On Trump, the wizard was emphatic as he consulted his deck of cards, the cornerstone of his mysterious Art:

“Two triangles of spades!” the great warlock exclaimed as he flipped through his cards. “The man has countless problems. And see, here is the devil himself! He will never become candidate for the Republican Party. And there’s more! I’m certain that in December, Trump will fall into a nervous crisis and will probably have to be sent to a psychiatric hospital.”

Vazquez also predicted the death of Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzmán, the notorious gangster who’s escaped from prison many times. The wizard has been wrong before, it’s true, but I believe him. How could you doubt that beard?

Mar 04, 2016

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Was Evil at the Congelier House?

ghosteyes.com

Posted on: June 9, 2009 /

Categories: Real Haunted Places

Recognized as one the most haunted places in America, the Congelier house as told by others is filled with an immense evil. The home was owned by Charles Wright Congelier, his wife Lyda, and their servant Essie and was located on the north end of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. The first event that may have started the house on its path of evil spirits was in 1871, when Lyda discovered an affair between her husband and Essie. She became so enraged of the ongoing affair, that Lyda stabbed Charles to death, and decapitated Essie.

Twenty years later, the Congelier house was purchased by a railroad company to house its workers. They had remodeled the home to accommodate them. However, they soon moved out of the mansion claiming that they heard the sounds of a young woman sobbing and screaming. From there the house became vacant until around 1900.

Dr Adolph C Brunrichter purchased the home around the early 1900's . Known as a recluse, his neighbors rarely caught glimpse of him. A year later, neighbors heard the screams of a young woman and when they came to check the commotion, they witnessed a large red explosion like flash coming from Dr Brunrichter's home. The explosion was so great, that every window in the house was shattered and the earth beneath began to tremble, which caused the sidewalls to crack.

Officials came to the home and discovered a female body which was strapped to the bed that was beginning to decompose. When the police reached the basement, they discovered five decapitated women who were buried in makeshift graves. To their amazement, the officers learned that the mad doctor was conducting experiments on these women, which he was successful in keeping a few of them alive after they were beheaded. However, Dr Brunrichter was nowhere to be found, as if he disappeared into thin air. Around 1927, a man who claimed to be Dr Brunrichter had been discovered near the Congelier house. He spoke of orgies, demonic influences, torture, and murders that took place in that house. He was kept in custody for a month, was released, and never to be seen or heard from again.

Nearby the Congelier house, stood the largest natural gas storage facility in the entire world, which caused an explosion that destroyed the house which was considered evil by local residents on November 15, 1927. The explosion was felt around the country which destroyed every house and business within a twenty mile radius. However, the Congelier house was the only structure that did not have any evidence to a direct cause. It was confirmed by a relative, that the house was left standing, but it was torn down to create the intersection that we know of now. Today, the Congelier house is now the intersection of state highway 65/1279 and nearby stands the Carnegie Science Center and Museum.

Over the years, residents witnessed several sightings that confirmed the Congelier house to not only be haunted while it was standing, but also since its destruction. In recent years, drivers have witnessed ghosts, which walk along the highway at night. Some have described

a few emigrants who worked for the Equitable Gas Company, that were residing in the home were found dead in the basement minutes after they were last seen. One had what appeared to be a stake through the chest while the other was found hanging from a rafter. Others had heard the screaming and sobbing of a woman throughout the night.

It became so profound that Thomas Edison investigated the home in 1920. While designing a machine to detect those who never crossed over, he discovered that there were spirits who had remained through the house. Edison passed away before he could finish the project, but had confirmed that the Congelier house is definitely haunted.

Many people believed the house was stricken with evil. However, some think that the Congelier story was more fiction than fact. All in all, the truth about what evil lies in the Congelier Mansion is left to be untold.

Stickney Mansion Hauntings June 15, 2009 In "Real Haunted Places"

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What on Earth was foot-tall 'creature' filmed hovering and strolling through street?

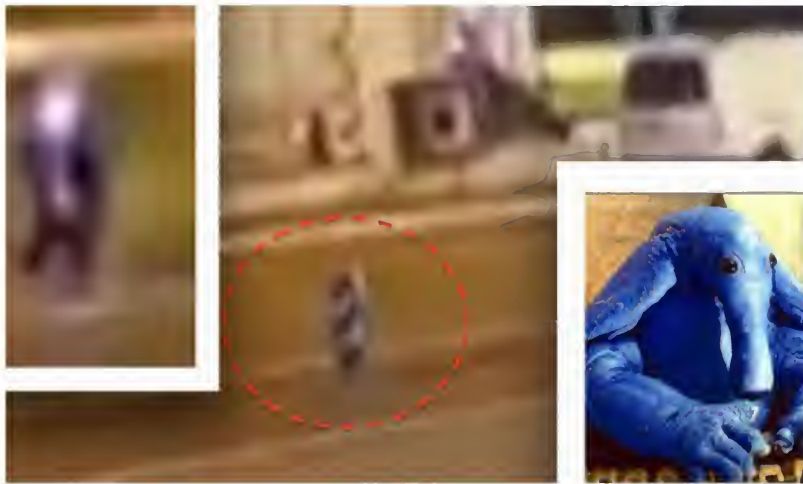
express.co.uk


What on Earth was foot-tall 'creature' filmed hovering and strolling through street?

AN ALIEN, monkey, penguin, plain old prank and even a balloon are some of the explanations for what is shown in an odd video hovering into the air and apparently walking.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 13:56, Wed, Feb 24, 2016 | UPDATED: 15:08, Wed, Feb 24, 2016



YouTube

The footage, which has appeared on YouTube, was said to be filmed by a security camera in Diyarbakir, Turkey, on February 12, before being viewed by thousands of people online.

It has even made its way onto conspiracy theory and alien websites where it has been described as "something inexplicable" and even an alien being.

The poor-quality video shows an object moving about that some have said could be an animal or even an alien life form.

One viewer even likened it to Mex Rebo the musical elephant-like alien from the Star Wars movies after suggesting there was a "trunk and ears".

The dark and light-coloured form is seen in the distance appearing to move or waddle, but due to the poor quality of the video it is hard to make out what it is.

At one point it rises into the air as if on a string, before coming back to, leading some viewers to say it was just an odd-shaped helium balloon that was running out of gas.

Towards the end of the footage it appears to meander off across a road.

But it has left many viewers less than impressed.

Robert "Mr UFO Hunter" Miles posted on YouTube: "Wow. I say, no way, that's a balloon."



YouTube

Others questioned if a penguin had been used by hoaxers and pulled up on string or that there was a drone involved.

One poster with the username Iguanadam said: "It looks a lot like balloon but does not fall to the ground. Diyarbakir is a very underdeveloped city. This is a fake."

Seasoned UFO hunter Scott C Waring, who edits UFO Sightings Daily, blogged about the video.

He said: "In the first six seconds of the video you can clearly make out that this object is half a metre tall, black and white and walking."

"Sure it can be a monkey, but how do you explain it hovering in the air and panda bears don't fly."



YouTube

"Only two possible answers, it's an alien, or this was a prank. This is one interesting security cam video."

6 Comments

3 days ago

Teddy Bear

It is a clanger. They speak with whistles and live on small moon like planet. They live on soap and blue string. I remember watching



YouTube

them on BBC in 1969-1972 as a young kid.

3 days ago

Teddy Bear

Soup no soap.

5 days ago

WayneApplebee

Stupid and pernicious aholeexpress articles.

5 days ago

AdrianManning

why are these camera films rubbish,

5 days ago

pollypleck

The aliens have landed and coming to take you away, away . and it may be a better place than earth is turning out to be ??????????????????????????????????????

6 days ago

John Nicholson

A bird in a penguin suit?

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When an Atom Bomb Dawned Over L.A.

kcet.org


• Geoff
Manaugh

February
24, 2016,
4:00 PM

The Los
Angeles

atom_bomb_dtla_crop.jpeg

Examiner's caption is haunting for its understatement. "Los Angeles Civic Center buildings by Nevada A Bomb blast, 1955." The light it captures suddenly seems too much: dangerous and unearthly. Coverage in the Times in the days following the atomic test in neighboring Nevada described the flash as if something had gone wrong with the calendar itself, the very turning of the planet malfunctioning with a stutter. "Los Angeles had two dawns yesterday," the newspaper wrote—an incredible statement in any context, stranger than science fiction—the first being this monstrous strobe that irradiated the city like an elemental flash bulb.

"Los Angeles had two dawns yesterday," the Times wrote.

Without all we know today of the medical, environmental, and even geopolitical effects of nuclear weapons, it would be easy to see this event in near-mythic terms. The hubris of an artificial sun illuminating distant cities in the desert. The planetary glow of a false star, engineered by human beings, flickering from hundreds of miles away, yet starkly visible. The sheer spectacle of it all literally shines with narrative symbolism, implying humankind arising as some new, astronomically powerful actor on the stage of the cosmos, out-glowing the zodiac itself with what the Times simply called "man-made sunlight."

In retrospect, however, the event has an unsettling naïvete, like a photo of school kids playing with mercury or a home movie of a parent renovating a baby's bedroom with lead-based paint. That the terrifying and sublime effects of atomic explosions have always lent themselves well to photography takes on an especially strange irony here, in this metropolis of film and sunlight: that a city would so casually use this unnatural luminosity to take a photo of itself for the morning paper, careless of the danger as the seductive allure of these midcentury detonations drew near.

Courtesy of the USC Libraries – Los Angeles Examiner Collection.

KCETLink Media Group



Los Angeles Civic Center buildings by Nevada A Bomb
blast, 1955

KCETLink, formerly Community Television of Southern California, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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Northeast Ohio's Haunted Places, Abandoned Cemeteries, Legends and other curiosities.

Witch's Grave (Kirtland)

Posted on October 10, 2012 by camevil

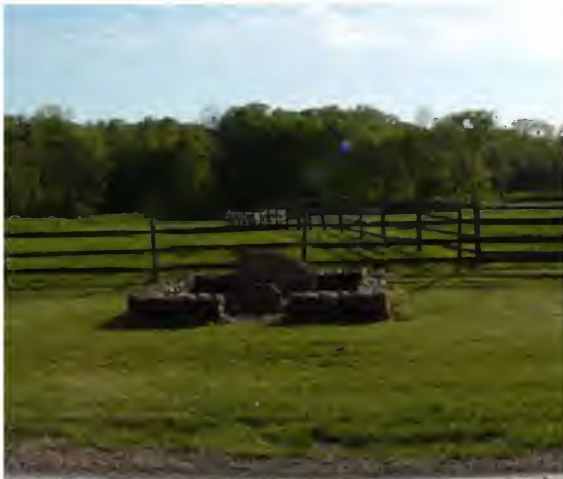
(Orig. published 9/2005)

They say that deep in the heart of mysterious Mormon country in Kirtland, a mysterious grave exists at the side of a rural road. Supposedly, it is the grave of a witch executed by local townsfolk in the early 1800's. If you are lucky enough to find the grave, and even braver still to approach it, something **strange** happens:

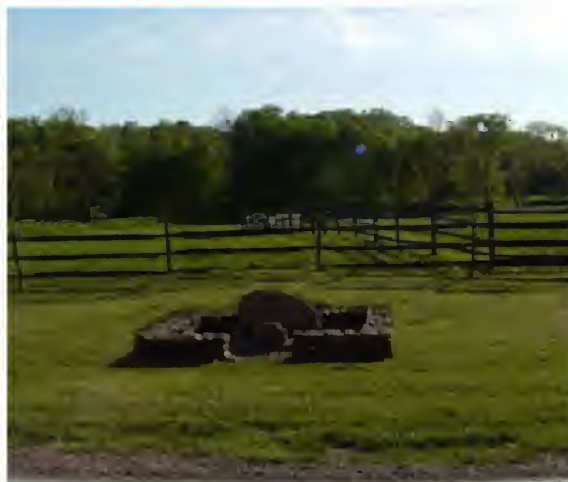
If you stare at the grave, turn your back to it, then turn around again, the grave will move closer to you.

Is this another urban legend or is there some truth to this old piece of lore?

As it turns out, the grave DOES exist. After much snooping, we were able to find the infamous grave, along a side road next to a farm.



So, that part of the legend is true. Now, what about the "test"?Hmmm.....



Did it move closer or is this a trick of the eye?

Wait a minute, there is

definitely a difference now....

Closer....

Holy shit.



Ok, ok.
The
grave
really
didn't
move.
So,
that
part of
the
legend
is
false.



The inscription on the headstone reads:

In memory of Levi Smith, Sept. 25th, 1774 to Jan. 5th, 1820 and Ruth Holbrook Smith (his wife) , Jan. 2nd, 1779 to October 28th, 1818. Who moved from this farm from Derby, Connecticut in 1814

So, this is the grave of Levi and Ruth Smith, who migrated here in the early 1800's. They died a few years after they arrived, at a fairly young age and within a short tune of each other. It is not known

how they died.

Derby, Connecticut, where the Smiths came from, was one of the first towns established in the American colonies in the late 1600's. What is also known is that Connecticut was a hotbed for alleged witchcraft delusions. Following the Revolutionary War, the colonies acquired a great amount of land, including the Ohio and surrounding Ohio Valley, and used it to provide property for displaced colonists following the devastating war. This land for many years was known as the Connecticut Western Reserve.

Levi Smith is known to be one of 12 members who started a small church in Kirtland, which later evolved into Mormonism. From its inception, the church met with a string of bad luck.

The first log church burned down under mysterious circumstances shortly after it was built. Another church was built. That one was quickly destroyed by a cyclone. Yet another church was built. But changes in the local population (most Mormons were driven out of the area by increasing hostilities from other settlers) caused the church to be relocated out of town.

Did we find any evidence of alleged witchcraft that would lend credence to this legend? No.

But one wonders if the legend has its origins in anti-Mormon sentiments against one of the movement's earliest founding fathers.

The grave, by the way, is in remarkable condition, with barely any signs of wear or vandalism. It's quite an interesting thing to see while going on a casual Sunday drive in Melon Head country.

READER SUBMISSION VAULT

submissionvault

10/26/05: Ashley offers up this, um, interesting variation



skeleton7

of the legend:

The more well-known legend surrounding the witches grave is that if, on Halloween, you pee on it, the pee will quickly rise off the grave. Not particularly astounding, as its often cold up here on Halloween, but it's a fun trip to make.

However, when peeing on this mysterious stone, I recommend being very careful. The roads are windy, and the Kirtland Police seem to come out of nowhere sometimes. They won't appreciate you peeing on the grave, but they'll just chase you away if you say you came only for a look.

This entry was posted in Cemeteries, Haunted Places, Local Folklore, Weird History and Oddities and tagged Cemeteries, Haunted Places, Kirtland, urband legend, witch by camevil. Bookmark the permalink.

One thought on "Witch's Grave (Kirtland)"



1. Paranormal Princess on March 30, 2015 at 3:31 am said:

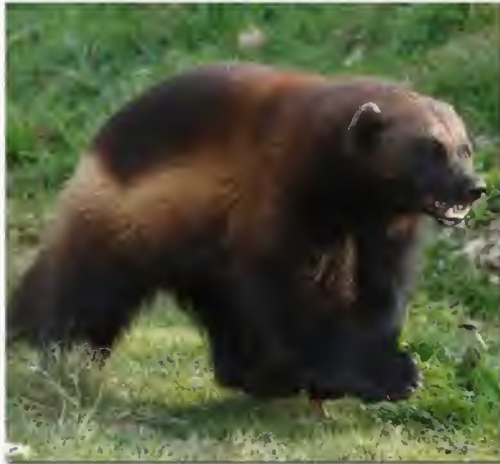
One of the most disrespectful comments I have ever read. I really hope anyone reading this is not that stupid and ignorant to actually believe and go and act on the comment regarding peeing on a deceased humans resting place. If you do.....may you get busted, arrested , thrown in jail and have a huge fine. RIP to the souls of the deceased that rest here. To living humans BE RESPECTFUL!

Reply ↓

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Reports: New Haven hit-&-run driver was a "wolverine with vampire teeth"By Patrick Johnson | pjohnson@repub.com Follow on Twitter on March 07, 2016 at 12:48 PM, updated March 07, 2016 at 3:02 PM

masslive.com



wolverine wolverine.jpg

A man who fled the scene of a New Haven accident is described as "a wolverine with vampire teeth." Above is a photo of an actual wolverine (left) and actor Hugh Jackman portraying the XMen character Wolverine. (Courtesy of 20th Century Fox)

Reports out of New Haven are that police are seeking a hit-and-run driver with some unusual characteristics: he is said to resemble a wolverine with "vampire teeth."

That is the description given to police by one witness to the accident early Monday that left a pedestrian seriously injured.

The accident occurred shortly after midnight at Grand Avenue near Poplar and Ferry streets.

One man suffered serious head and leg injuries, according to reports of the accident that by Connecticut news outfits FOX61, the Hartford Courant and the East Haven Patch.

The pedestrian was struck by a car, described as a white, two-door Honda Accord, possibly a 1999 or 2000 model. The car has tinted windows and likely has damage to the windshield.

But it's the description of the driver that so far has intrigued the press.

The driver was described as looking like a wolverine with a short, stocky build. The same witness said the driver appeared to have "vampire teeth."

It is unclear if the witness felt the driver resembled Wolverine from the X-Men comics or an actual wolverine.

He also was wearing a white t-shirt, jeans and white sneakers.

The driver faces charges for leaving the scene of a personal injury accident.

The New Haven police have an anonymous tip line at (866)888-8477(866)888-8477 FREE.



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Could a woman become a knight in medieval times?

Monday 4th May 2015

historyextra.com



A medieval knight had a number of set roles and duties – not least to fight in battle and lead men to war.

This article was first published online in January 2015

As a result, it was usual for knights in the medieval period to be men who had trained for warfare from an early age. However, the situation wasn't quite so clear-cut.

Any man who held enough land to afford the cost of arms and armour, and to take time away from his estates to join the army, was expected to be a knight. He would have to turn up at any military muster, mounted and armed, and very often would bring a retinue of men at arms or archers.

The king also expected knights to maintain law and order, ensure taxes were paid, and keep roads repaired and river crossings usable.

When a dead knight's land passed to his wife or daughter, these duties were imposed on that woman. In England the title of Lady was usually given to such a woman, but in France, Tuscany and Romagna she was given the male title.

In 1358, women finally gained full knightly acceptance in England when they began to be admitted to chivalric orders – though they are called dames, not knights.

Answered by one of our Q&A experts, Rupert Matthews. For more fascinating questions by Rupert, and the rest of our panel, pick up a copy of *History Revealed!* Available in print and for digital devices.

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This Haunted Missouri Winery Is The Stuff Nightmares Are Made Of

March 01, 2016

onlyinyourstate.com



logo

This Haunted Missouri Winery Is The Stuff Nightmares Are Made Of

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is a religiously and politically

independent fraternal order founded in 1819 by Thomas Wilkey in Baltimore, Maryland. They constructed a number of buildings on what was originally a 240-acre farm in Liberty. Now known as the historic Odd Fellows Home District, it was established in 1900. It is now home to Belvoir Winery, an active business. This location is also said to be extremely haunted.



Facebook/ Belvoir Winery

Only three of the historical buildings remain amongst a sprawl of elegant buildings in the hills of Clay County. This area is currently the home of the Belvoir Winery, and visitors often experience unexplained supernatural phenomena. The historic district is so well known for its hauntings that the SyFy Channel's Ghost Hunters filmed an episode there.

The historic buildings include the administration building, the "old folks home," and the hospital. One of the buildings was also used as an orphanage at one time.

It is believed that many of the nearly 600 people who are buried in the cemetery on the site may still be lingering around, haunting the winery buildings. Ghost sightings have included orphan children, a mischievous man, and a singing old lady.

The stories of hauntings abound. People have heard odd voices and noises, including children giggling and running up and down the stairs. Doors



Facebook/ Belvoir Winery

have opened and closed by themselves.

The owner tells an account of seeing a little boy in a red shirt, blue knickers and brown boots, who appeared near the fireplace. Although the boy was visible, the owner could still see the details of the fireplace through him.



YouTube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

Children have been heard singing "Ring Around the Rosy" in the halls. The owner's daughter heard a little girl talk to her. The piano has played on its own.

The stories go on and on. Perhaps the most haunted building on the property is an old brick hospital that was constructed in 1923. Located on the northern end of the property, it is now known as Old Hospital.

It was the only medical facility in Liberty for quite some time, and even had its own laboratory. Over time, it became outdated, as the halls and doorways were not wide enough for movement of hospital beds and equipment. As a solution, the Nursing Home was built in 1955, and the hospital opened up to paying, non-members of the order.



YouTube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

On Friday nights each October, the winery offers public paranormal investigations. These events are so popular that they tend to sell out quickly.

The winery and its buildings are also popular with people in the supernatural business. Professional paranormal investigators such as the Ghost Hunters and CREEPZ have found remarkable amounts of evidence.



YouTube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

People have had some odd experiences during some of these investigations. On one occasion while investigating the hospital, a woman had to sit down after feeling unsteady. She stood after a few minutes, but then her head hit a wall, her eyes were rolling back in her head, and she was sweating. When she finally recovered, she had no memory of what had happened.



YouTube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

During the same exploration, investigators heard a deep growl coming from the room known as “the mischievous man’s room.” When they heard it again, one woman offered to check it out. As she walked toward the room, she felt an oppressive feeling, like doom or dread. Eventually, she retreated without continuing. The growling ended up being enough for the rest of the group as well. At this point, they were all ready to leave the building.

In the administration building, once used as an orphanage, meters went crazy when investigators sang “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”



YouTube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

In an outbuilding once used for food storage, dowsing rods turned up some interesting activity. Supposedly, the orphans used to hide in this storage space in order to avoid their chores.

When investigators asked questions such as “Where are your friends?” the rods pointed to locations throughout the room. A conversation through the dowsing rods continued, and when it was time to say goodbye, one woman experienced the feeling of being

hugged.

Voices, laughing and singing seem to be the most common evidence. However, some people have seen apparitions and shadow people throughout the grounds. One man saw someone peeking around a corner.

The feeling of being watched is also common. In addition, much like the woman experiencing the hug, others have reported physical contact such as being grabbed by the shoulders.

Belvoir Winery is an active business, and

does acknowledge and capitalize on the hauntings and old buildings. Besides the public paranormal investigations in October, they also provide guided tours. Other events at the winery include a “Halloween Massacre” on October 31 and Murder Mystery Dinners in November, December and January.

They are located at 1325 Odd Fellows Road in Liberty. For more information about the winery



You Tube/ CREEPZ Ghost Commandos

and events, click . Check out this spooky video by CREEPZ Ghost Commandos:

Have you ever visited Belvoir Winery or the Odd Fellows Historic District? Would you like to? Whether you believe in ghosts or not, it is sure to be an interesting experience.

Stephanie Butler

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